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CURRENT COMMENT.

THE third-party movement seems to have been more or less of a fizzle. Well, there is nothing like experience, no doubt, and if nobody ever tries anything there will be no progress; still, one dislikes a waste of effort and the signs of the times were so clearly against the policy of the Committee of Forty-eight that their particular effort at Chicago might have been economized. There seems little left for the Committee to do but revert to educational and propagandist policies; and in these they will find that the temper and tendencies of the time co-operate with them most powerfully. They will suffer an abatement of interest and confidence as a penalty for notoriously bad judgment leading up to a fiasco; but this can be recovered.

THIS failure of judgment was largely due to imperfect knowledge of our electorate. It is obvious, or should be, that no one takes politics seriously. Americans have not yet begun objectively to reflect upon the actual nature of politics and their bearing upon human welfare; hence to most of us, politics are but a routine affair, unintelligently accepted, and superficially considered. At some time, of course, we shall begin to see them as they really are, and to act accordingly. The Committee's basic error in policy was due to their thinking that we are much further along the road to this realization than we actually are, or for some time shall be.

THEN, too, people are notoriously slow to act upon knowledge when they have it. Everyone knows, in a general way, that rats entail an annual economic loss running up into the millions, and that they are disease-carriers. We also know that it is no great trick to get rid of them by concerted action, yet we continue to let them overrun us. The same is true of house-flies; it is quite as true of politics. Education upon the nature of these pests takes time, and this education then has to be followed up by a great deal of education of the communal will. Hence it is likely that politics will have their way with us for some time, and likely too that when they cease to do so, it will not be by any direct change in the mode of individual self-expression in politics, such as was contemplated by the Committee of Forty-eight. It will much more probably be by progressive encroachment of the economic organization.

That is the indication of all past history, and it is quite as clearly indicated by the course of contemporary events.

A THIRD party, however, was formed at Chicago; and for the benefit of those interested in its genesis, purposes and prospects, this paper is very glad to publish the account which appears in this issue from the pen of Mr. Dudley Field Malone. We wish the new party every bit of luck in the world. Its line is not the same as ours, but that is no bar to good-will and a hopeful recognition of the principle *solvitur ambulando*. It evidently has the merit of sincerity and earnestness, which is a good deal to say where politics are concerned. Since the party is an accomplished fact, there is no particular point in criticizing its programme; and we are very glad of that, because our readers are already aware of all we could find to say about it.

ONLY one thing could be more ludicrous than the spectacle of Governor Cox projecting the League of Nations as the major issue of the campaign; and that is the spectacle of Senator Harding accepting his challenge. There are several issues which some think are dead and staler than the League of Nations—and so they may be, if there are degrees of deadness and staleness. There is the authorship of the Isidorian decretals, for instance, and the number of disembodied spirits that can stand on the point of a needle. The Governor might prepare a brisk, stirring campaign on the irremissibility of post-baptismal sin. That would be nice and lively and would be sure to keep the attention of Americans from becoming focussed on something that amounts to something. Mr. Cox's inventive genius has not been stimulated by his call on President Wilson. The veteran ringmaster at least had the knack of making his specialties sound interesting in advance; but Mr. Cox's first piece of press-agenting gives one no more than the very mild thrill produced by the contemplation of a last month's weather map or a report of the United States Fish Commission.

REPORTS of the Spa Conference continue to furnish their quota of entertainment. The funny thing about them is the continued pretence that anything that is said there means something. The Allied Premiers serve this or that "ultimatum" every now and then, and the German emissaries accept it, but how either group can keep their faces straight while they go through these performances is hard to understand. The latest ultimatum is that Germany shall furnish 2,000,000 tons of coal monthly. The Germans accepted, of course; but the experienced observer merely hopes that the Allied Premiers are not depending on any of that coal for their own domestic purposes next winter.

ALONG with each ultimatum goes the threat of occupation of the Ruhr district; but the Germans are quite as well aware as anyone that this threat is not much to be dreaded. Occupation requires troops, for one thing; and it is like pulling teeth to raise an army these days. Again, it costs money; and it is next to impossible to raise money. If the United States had followed its ignis fatuus only a little further and been landed in the job of deputy-marshal-general and banker-extraordinary for the Allied Powers, as those Powers and President Wilson fully intended we should be, the case would be very

different. As it is, if the Allies occupied the Ruhr district, labour in that district and, perhaps, largely all over Germany, would simply stop work, and there would immediately be the mischief to pay in France, England and Italy over the cost of the enterprise. An English newspaper summed up the situation pretty well the other day in a cartoon showing an Englishman and a German shaking hands. "Shake, brother," said the Englishman, "You pay, and I pay for making you pay."

THE Spa Conference is now spoken of as issuing in a "moral victory" for the Allies, and this is undoubtedly true in the sense that the mother won a moral victory when she met her little boy's point-blank refusal to come indoors, with the command, "Then stay out; I *will* be minded." Germany got pretty nearly half of what she asked for, and it now remains to be seen whether she will make any particularly energetic motions towards living up to her new obligations. It is a fair guess that she will not; and if she does not, it is hard to see what form compulsion can profitably take. A Western sheriff once levied on a flock of chickens for a debt from their owner. He chased the chickens around and around the house, and whenever he caught one, he sat down, wrung its neck, and charged mileage; and in the end his mileage amounted to more than the debt. Still, no doubt the transaction represented a moral victory of some kind.

It is very gratifying to the *amour-propre* to speak in tones of stern command, whether any one heeds or not. The Allied Premiers have been particularly forward of late in the rôle of the Terrible-tempered Mr. Bang. They have spoken sharply to Turkey, saying that if she does or does not do thus and so, they will drive her out of Europe. Then, through the British Government, they sent a note to Moscow, suggesting an armistice between the Soviet Governments and Poland, and hinting at the possibility of a treaty to be executed in London for establishing peace between Soviet Russia and the States on her border. If the Soviets decline this offer and step over a neutral zone of fifty kilometers outside the provisional Polish border, the Allies will assist Poland "with all the means at their disposal." Since those means have already been used and are about used up, there is a certain humour in this. The Soviet Government sent a reply, declining a conference in London, intimating that it would attend to Poland in its own way, and generally suggesting that the Allied Premiers mind their business; and thus ends a rather futile facetious correspondence, quite as anyone might know it would end.

WHEN anything serious comes up, however, the Soviets manage to attend to it promptly. For instance, a report from London says that Santeri Nuorteva, lately an associate of the Russian Soviet Bureau here, was arrested and deported from England to Russia. The Soviet Bureau promptly served notice upon the firm of Montreal brokers with which they had not been dealing, that if Nuorteva had been, or should be, deported, the \$6,000,000 worth of contracts undertaken in Canada would be cancelled. That is the kind of language that really talks anywhere in His Majesty's Dominions, and it is a safe wager that its echo has been heard in Westminster in considerably less time than the time usually required for sound to travel.

THE status of the Greco-Turkish imbroglio is certainly mystifying. One day it is announced that the Supreme Council has sanctioned the use of the Greek forces against Kemal Pasha; the next day it is solemnly affirmed that they have done no such thing. One day the British fleet in Asia Minor bombards the Turkish line, killing 1000 Turks; and a day or two later Mr. Lloyd George tells the House that Great Britain has assumed no obligation to help the Greeks in their anti-Turkish offensive. It is very confusing. Perhaps the British fleet was hold-

ing target-practice; perhaps it bombarded the Turks merely "to be a-doing," as the New England folks say; or perhaps those shots were fired in a fit of absent-mindedness like the famous one in which the Empire is said to have been created. On the whole, the affair seems to be carried on with a degree of absent-mindedness which is magnificent, and which may help to obscure responsibility should the venture have an unfortunate ending.

NEWS-DISPATCHES from England say that the special Trades-Union Congress called to consider the state of Ireland, has by a majority of over one million votes, served notice on the British Government that all troops must be withdrawn from Ireland, or there will be "direct action" taken in the way of a general strike. The resolution also demanded that the manufacture of munitions for use against Ireland and Russia cease forthwith. The British Government has made an uncommonly prompt reply, declining to withdraw the troops, and protesting that the Congress is under a misapprehension as to the purpose of their being kept there; the purpose being to keep the peace and to prevent Ireland from falling a prey to factional strife. This will hardly go down even in England; but no doubt, as heretofore, organized labour will leave the Government some way to save its face provided the substance of its demands is conceded, as it surely will be in short order.

ONE action like this of the Trades-Union Congress is obviously worth more in pulling the teeth of political government than electing a hundred Labour members to the House of Commons. British labour has gone through a long and costly education for the sake of learning the utter futility of attempting to change the character of Parliament. One rather wonders why American labour does not profit by British experience and begin where British labour now is, rather than drag on over the same path which British labour has so abundantly demonstrated to lead nowhere. No wars can be fought, no conquests established and maintained, no imperialist foreign policies laid down, no exploitations effected, unless with the concurrence of labour and of capital, and if either labour or capital or both decline to concur, there is a summary end of the matter.

THE anthracite coal commission appointed by President Wilson to arbitrate the differences between the miners and the operators, is squeamish about admitting in evidence certain data prepared by Mr. Lauck, consulting economist to the miners. His findings not only show an immense increase in the net profits of the operators since 1914, but also bear strongly on the monopolistic control of the industry. There is no simpler and less complicated instance of private monopoly of economic rent than is afforded by the ownership of anthracite coal; and if the miners are properly advised, they can make a very impressive public showing, whether the commission admits their data or not. Coal-mining is educative work; it brings men literally face to face with private ownership of the economic rent of a basic natural resource. It is not surprising, therefore, that here as in England, the miners' organizations are pretty radical bodies and quite well-informed. The findings of President Wilson's commission, naturally, will not be worth two straws; nevertheless, when the argument is over, a great many miners will have much clearer notions of what the trouble is, and what to do about it, and that is the important thing.

MR. SAMUEL GOMPERS has been going through the bizarre motions of balancing the Democratic platform against the Republican, with special reference to the labour-plank, and seems to think that labour gets a shade the better of it from the Democrats. There is no obvious reason why Mr. Gompers should do this, unless, like the rest of us, he does it for amusement, as a sort of variant of golf or solitaire or reading about the yacht-races. Mr.

Gompers is quite well aware that party-platforms, like the razors that Hodge bought at the fair are made to sell; and that labour will really get out of one party just as much as it will get out of another—namely, what it can extort. This business of appearing to take a platform seriously, is pretty frivolous for a person of Mr. Gompers's age and experience; and it has a bad influence. Mr. Gompers could have done labour a good service by remaining away from the conventions and pointing out that any dependence on overtures or promises from any political organization is futile and stultifying. It can be put down as a postulate that labour, like capital, will be exploited by any political organization to the precise degree that it permits itself to be exploited. This is the primary purpose of politics; and Mr. Gompers's polite pretence to the contrary is a conspicuous disservice to the cause of labour.

INSTEAD of paying attention to Mr. Gompers, or tangling up its brains over the conspicuous futilities of the party-platforms, American labour would find much greater profit in the study of a dispatch from Chicago, 12 July, printed in the *New York Evening Post*. It deals with the railway situation, and says, (*italics ours*):

There is likely to be an equalization in the wage advances to be granted by the Labour Board, but it is not expected that there will be any improvement in the efficiency of the workers for some time, or *until there is something like 105 men for every 100 jobs*:

There is the real labour-plank of both parties. The only way that the exploitation of labour can take place is by the creation of a labour-surplus. When it is created, the exploitation will be resumed as stringently as circumstances permit, no matter what the platforms say; and until it is created, labour is not exploitable. The doctrine of the labour-surplus is not, as a rule, intimated as candidly as it is in this dispatch, and the *Evening Post* deserves credit for its frankness.

THERE can be no such thing as a labour-surplus until the population has been driven off the land by actual or legal occupation. Since 1890, the land of the United States, though very sparsely populated by actual occupation—only thirty-three to the square mile—is legally occupied to the last inch. Under these conditions, a temporary labour-surplus can be created at any time by closing down industries, until labour, having no economic alternative, is starved into submission. This would be quite a natural way out of our difficulties with labour at present, and one would hazard the expectation that we might resort to it in the early autumn. If so, or indeed, whenever it is done, American labour can see precisely how much or how little, in a practical way, its preoccupation with politics amounts to.

A BIT of bad news for the Steel Corporation and other industries interested in maintaining a labour-surplus, has just come to hand. A survey of immigrant employment-agencies by the Inter-Racial Council has disclosed the fact that there are very few unskilled labourers among recent immigrants, and that the supply of that class of labour is practically exhausted. Unless that condition can be somehow changed, the future looks a little difficult for the industries mentioned. They have hitherto maintained their anti-union policy and incidentally scratched up their modest living by depending on the labour-surplus provided by large batches of low-grade immigrant labour. If a labour-surplus can not be kept up by immigration, it must be kept up by lock-outs, and this costs money. Probably this paper ought to have some practical advice to offer these harried industries, but it somehow can not think of anything to say.

Two weeks ago, this paper published a few statistics tending to show what political government means in terms of money. The Society for the Study of the Social Consequences of the War, a neutral organization with headquarters at Copenhagen, has now produced figures

tending to show the price it exacts in terms of human life. Its report covers the entire period of the war, from August 1914 to October 1919. The total loss of life due to the war, the world over, is estimated at 40,000,000 lives, of which 12,000,000 were lost in battle. The concomitant decline in the birth-rate for ten European countries represents a loss in population by 20,250,000 births; while the rise in the death-rate represents a loss of 15,130,000. Instead of a normal increase of 24,000,000 in the population of these ten countries, there has been an actual reduction of population by 12,000,000. The report makes no estimate of the impairment of power due to disablement.

HERE, now, is something precious odd. Mrs. Oliver H. P. Belmont, who fit, bled and died for woman suffrage, getting up and advising women not to vote, observes:

After nine centuries of man's government, with the opportunity for learning over this extended period, the only way they have found to settle domestic problems like the high cost of living is by regulating profiteering, by protecting and condoning the whole system of exploitation which practically denies to the multitude the necessities of every-day life. Does this indicate work for the betterment of the human race? Put a high price on your freedom. Keep away from the Democratic and Republican parties. You women have had nothing to do with selecting their candidates. You have had nothing to do with writing their platforms. You ought to have nothing to do with putting them in power. Your vote means now simply strengthening a power that is not with the human race, nor for its betterment, and does not represent its needs.

That is the most encouraging thing that has come to us out of the suffragists' camp. Then, too, the redoubtable Mrs. Catt pops up this week in a London paper, telling the Suffrage Congress at Geneva that in the face of the disaster that had overtaken the world since the last Congress in 1913, the newly-won vote seemed a pitifully small thing. If these women keep on like this, it will be a sure sign that somebody is doing some thinking—and, who knows, perhaps the custom may spread.

It is pleasant to hear that American book-publishers are at last displaying business acumen that promises to raise their calling to the level of gasfitters, bankers, real-estate brokers and other groups that organize for self-protection and mutual advantage. They are now forming an association to improve the practice of their trade and to foster helpful relations with retail booksellers. The senseless antagonisms between book-producer and book-distributor can and should be done away with, for their fundamental interests are common, the two branches being interdependent. In fact, it is merely a modern development that the operations of printing, publishing and bookselling are separate; in earlier times the three functions were united in one man. He would sometimes exchange surplus copies of the books that he printed and published for the surplus of other printers, and thus the custom of carrying miscellaneous stocks grew. The publishers of this country were once before organized, but the Supreme Court put them out of business by imposing a heavy fine, under the Sherman law, for their attempt to control prices after their wares were sold to retailers. The new association, like a burnt child, will mind its own business, which means that the publishers may achieve much good for themselves, the retailers and the public.

The editors can not be responsible for manuscripts submitted, but if return postage be enclosed, they will do all in their power to see that rejected manuscripts are returned promptly.

It is not to be understood that articles signed with a name, pseudonym, or initials necessarily agree with the opinion of the editors, either as to substance or style. They are printed because, in the editors' judgment, they are intrinsically worth reading.

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TOPICS OF THE DAY.

THE ROOT OF THE MATTER.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD, the English socialist, is now raising his voice to a brand-new tune, and hits the notes with no more diffidence than one would expect at a dress-rehearsal. His words are to be urged upon the attention of American socialists, upon the Non-partisan League, and upon the left wing of the American labour-movement. They are to be urged especially upon those brethren whose excellent intentions have contributed most of the material for Satan's more recent paving-contracts—the American liberals. First, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald says:

The socialist State must be a condition of individual liberty, and not merely an authority imposing obedience. Hence the socialist programme must be so devised that its compulsions, its organization, its communal control shall be of a kind which liberates the individual, protects him from industrial and economic slavery, and makes possible for him an entry into a world of intellectual and spiritual freedom.

One is bound to say that this forecast does not sound like any socialism that one ever heard or read of; but no matter. The thing, rather than the name, is what one is interested in; and if Mr. Ramsay Macdonald proposes these specifications and chooses to call his work the basis of a socialist programme, he may certainly do so. If he can square himself with the shades of the defunct philosophers of socialism, he will find no trouble with the radicals of this world. He proceeds:

... The nation has become the people's inheritance. The gifts of creation, upon which all our trade and commerce rests, have, by all moral right, passed under the ownership of the people, and the justification for legislation imposing special taxation upon rent and special control upon the uses of land can not be questioned. The fight for the historical thing called Great Britain has gained for the people a right to possess the material thing of the same name.

But the people always had that right. The nation always was the people's inheritance. The gifts of creation, by all moral right, have always been under the ownership of the people, and it was only when the people chose to forego that moral right, that private monopoly of these gifts of creation set in. Here is one of the little touches of nervousness that beset performers in a new rôle. If Mr. Ramsay Macdonald had talked like this seven years ago, when it would have done more good, his nervousness would have worn off by this time and he would be, as we say, "all there." But no one can complain, because in his next sentence he strikes his top note and strikes it like a master:

The better organization of industry and the increased efficiency of labour will also mean more rent, for no legislation devised by the wit of man can prevent the operation of the economic law of rent.

There! Week in and week out this paper has been harping on the one fundamental truth that you can not possibly beat the law of rent. This fact most unceremoniously takes the ground out from under orthodox trades-unionism, out from under all the projects for the "democratization" or the "socialization" of industry, and the only reason why it does not take the ground out from under our current quasi-political liberalism is that there was never any real ground there, but only the apparent ground of a helpless and incurious sentimentalism. Trades-unionism may get all the wages in the world; the Brass Button Brigade may develop all the "technique of organization" they can think of; the socializers of industry may socialize

and the democratizers of industry may democratize until the cows come home; the liberals may hopefully fiddle with political placebos: but it all comes simply to so much more provender for the insatiable maw of economic rent. Well, then, this paper has always said, get rid of the private monopoly of economic rent and we are cordially with you. Confiscate economic rent, and then we will turn in and help you democratize and socialize and work up a technique of organization to your heart's content; unless, indeed, as we think, when economic rent is once confiscated, all those things will very largely settle themselves. But why in the name of logic and common sense, should we or anyone else sweat blood over wages, hours, conditions of labour, housing, socialization, the Plumb plan, or what not, merely to have a private monopoly of economic rent step in and cabbage all the benefits? We do not see it.

Neither does Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. He goes on to his finale, *fortissimo*:

... In the impoverished and debt-burdened state of the nation the rent-portion of production can not be allowed to pass into private pockets to maintain a new class of parasitic people or to enrich an old one. Thus an old socialist argument that economic rent must be taken by the State because it is created by circumstances of which the whole community is entitled to take advantage, has been enormously enforced by the results and experiences of the war. And it is fundamental.

We earnestly hope that some person who has the impulse of the evangelist will somehow smuggle the import of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's utterances into the consciousness of the socialist brethren in this country. When the argument was ours, we felt, naturally, as mere outsiders, a little delicacy about crowding them with it; but Mr. Ramsay Macdonald is one of the children of the covenant, a man of eminence and distinction in the faith, properly furnished and upholstered with all the grips, signs, passwords and shibboleths. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald says that the central doctrine of the confiscation of economic rent is an old socialist argument, so no doubt they will recognize it as such and perhaps be disposed to crow over this paper for having preached up socialism all its short life without being aware of what it was doing. But if Mr. Ramsay Macdonald is right, we will accept the soft impeachment gladly, and we do not for a moment say he is wrong, but we think we are entitled to say that no socialists of our acquaintance ever bore down very hard on this old argument or followed it through very far—at least, not in our hearing.

Then, will not some one introduce Mr. Ramsay Macdonald to our new Labour party? He ought to be hailed as an old friend, having sat as a Labour member in the House, and been identified most closely with the interests of British labour all his life. Then the liberals: Mr. Ramsay Macdonald has always seemed to be a prime favourite with the organs of liberal thought. The liberal journals often publish his articles, apparently whenever they can get them, and they have every now and then shown themselves disposed to make much of him. Why not let the country hear from them on these recent pronouncements of his. We can think of two or three liberal writers—it would probably be invidious to name them—from whom a few well-balanced observations on Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's doctrine would be a perfect treat. Now that routine politics have slacked off into the doldrums for a few weeks, let them take this up and integrate it constructively or orientate it objectively,

or do whatever it is that liberals are supposed to do with a subject when they really warm up to it and intend to do themselves proud. Perhaps Mr. Ramsay Macdonald may turn out to be the great interpreter, reconciler and precipitant. If on the strength of his distinguished name and service to their several causes, his newly-resurrected doctrine recommends itself to the liberals, the socialists and the left-wing labourites and sets them all marching on together, this paper will cheerfully tag along in their wake as an unconsidered camp-follower.

THE LIMBO OF THE MAGAZINES.

ONE of the singular phenomena of our life has been the rapid appearance of a class, one might almost say a generation, deeply and eagerly interested in literature, to whom our native literature, our "official" literature, the art of the American novelist, of the American magazine, means either nothing at all or nothing but an evil symptom. It is an error to suppose that this class consists only or even mainly of the more recent immigrant population, which has not had time to assimilate the American view of life. It includes a large and daily increasing number of those whose ancestral memories reach back beyond the early days of the Republic, to the Connecticut farm and the Virginia plantation of the seventeenth century.

We have here what is perhaps the most significant of all facts with which American criticism has to reckon. The more literature comes to mean to us, the more we mature, the more the American inoculation fails to "take." Why is this? Is there an irreparable breach between the younger generation and the older? Is there no law of the literary life through which writers can approach one another in a common purpose?

Literature, as one comes to know it, to feel it, to live it, is a mystical experience, a religious experience, alike for the writer and for the race: it is, for both, to "have life and have it more abundantly." It is a sort of progressive approach to that universal reality, of which our spirits are aware at moments, that reality a sense of which we share in common as men, which, in so far as we participate in it, accelerates our own growth as individuals, and which is the ultimate cause of all our aspirations toward unity, harmony, understanding, freedom. But this is an abstraction: one would rather attempt to say what literature does than what it is. Literature *awakens*. We Americans are all too familiar with the psychology of advertising: how many of our desires have not been awakened by advertising? Without advertising, how many Americans would ever have discovered that four porcelain bathtubs, five kinds of talcum powder, and six kinds of soap are absolutely essential in a civilized household? The brisk young business man of our day, "Arrow" collar, "style-plus" raiment, "quality" shoes, "distinctive" necktie, haughty frown and all, is, from top to toe, a creation of the advertiser. The desire to approximate to a certain pattern has been evoked in him from without, and he responds with all the alacrity of a true son of freedom. And what advertising does, literature does also.

For are the desires of men confined to soap and a haughty frown, prestige, that is, and cleanliness? That is not the experience of literature. Who can count the impulses which, in history, poets have stirred to life, unlocked, as it were, and liberated into the sphere of action? Under the eyes of this generation all Ireland has awakened to the desire to become itself, to

direct its own destinies. What is the fountainhead of that desire but the poets of Ireland? The conditions were ripe, the people had become susceptible, the poets spoke. To what extent has not the character of the Russian revolution, of the French revolution, been determined by the characters of poets, novelists and philosophers? Who evoked in the French of the Napoleonic epoch that thirst for glory which placed them in the hands of their emperor? Who convinced the Germans that they were a Chosen Race? Literature is not directly an ethical force, one must see it first of all as a force merely; poets can play on human nature as a musician plays on an instrument, they can evoke from it desires that answer to their own desires; man, with his whole scale of latent impulses, lies at the mercy of this eloquent agent of what Emerson called the Oversoul, this Pied Piper of the Unconscious.

Literature is a powerful force, one might perhaps say also that it is a sinister force. But that would be an error. Literature is "beyond good and evil." Its function is to awaken man in his totality; it leaves to man himself the disposition of his energies, it makes man himself a "free agent." For the sinister activities that literature often seems to promote, literature is not itself responsible: for these the conditions of society are responsible, the conditions which, seizing upon the awakened individual, enslave him once more and make of the free man the agent of temporal "necessities." This, to choose a recent illustration, was the fate of Nietzsche's writings. Literature proposes, society disposes.

Now it is a sense of this which explains, in retrospect, that growing indifference to our official American literature of which I have spoken. One grows up unaware that anything specifically is amiss with it, that it lacks anything. One has to pass through years of exile as it were, of a detachment from appearances, of a groping absorption in essences, before one is able to perceive, before one is *interested* in perceiving, that it lacks, in truth, everything. By which one means that it is not a force at all. One thinks of all that literature can do, one remembers all that literature has done, by awakening man's impulses. This literature of ours awakens no impulses at all, it merely confirms certain tendencies in the American consciousness, to which the conditions of our society have already given birth. Chief among these is, of course, the desire for success and prestige. How deeply ingrained, from whatever cause, this desire for prestige is in the American mind can be seen, quaintly enough, in the life of that typical modern American, Mrs. Eddy: her devout biographer is less at pains, one would almost say, to prove Mrs. Eddy's piety than her good breeding, her taste in dress, the quality of her rustic antecedents, her misfortune in having been dragged into marriage with a "flamboyant" dentist, her obligation to desert the "narrow-minded artisans" who had been her first followers when she began to form her clientele in the higher circles of Boston. There is no need to say that in this we have the germ of the great American Odyssey, to which almost every one of our novelists has added his canto. It is enough to add that the best of them, Henry James and Edith Wharton, have, no less than the worst, in their deification of the "better sort" (the aristocracy of wealth and its spiritual issues) pandered to the same worship of prestige. To this gospel there are, of course, conscientious objectors: writers who, quite simply, accept the conditions into which they are

thrown and make amusing "realistic" patterns of them, writers who seize upon the "problems" of American society and try, like politicians out of water, to restore the social virtues of a bucolic past. One does not wish to ridicule these writers: they are, precisely, according to their lights, honest and well-intentioned citizens. But even if there were any chance of their succeeding in their ultimate aims—they would understand that there is not, if they knew more of life—those aims would not cease to be practical. They awaken, perhaps, the conscience of the citizen: they can not awaken the impulses of the man.

In a word, with these negligible exceptions, American literature is an adjunct to the business life, to that incurable passion for getting up in the world which possesses our fellow-countrymen and which is, at bottom, essentially pathetic. Even the "message" of Henry James affords a stimulus to the pursuit of those material means without which the Henry James "states of mind," last refinements of plutocracy as they are, would be quite inaccessible. However primitive the level, however unaware of it the novelist himself may be, that passion is at once the focus and the explanation of the constituent elements of our fiction. Not to "have life and have it more abundantly" is its note but, one might almost say, to have wealth and to have it more abundantly. It is to get up in the world, not to get out in the universe. And for this reason it is, with all its trappings of style and technique and opulent romance, as dead as Carlo Borromeo.

II.

If this literature is dead, its creators, on the other hand, are not. Nor, one comes to believe, are they happy in such a consummation of their activities.

It is difficult to convey a sense of the strangeness with which, after the typical literary novitiate of the younger generations, one turns back to the creators of this accepted American literature. One realizes, after the first shock of recognition, after one has faced these novelists and magazine-writers whose names echo in one's mind with such an odd familiarity, that they are not the time-servers, the money-worshippers, yes, let us say it, the scoundrels, one has dimly imagined, but rather men such as we like to believe ourselves, creditable citizens, spirits impelled by a conscience of one sort or another, and even *writers*, with some faint, lingering traces of the divine type, with, more often than not, a desire to excel, a not obliterated instinct of workmanship, a touching humility in the presence of the "real thing." Among so many weeds, so many hardy, contemptuous weeds, doughty preachers and headlong journalists by training, "average sensual men" in their habits of life, who for the most part compose the Authors' League, let us say, one discerns the creative artist (as he calls himself in moments of aspiration), the divided spirit, the apologetic soul who feels that his intention has somehow lost its track, the good man, one comes to believe, over whom circumstances have prevailed, whom circumstances have blighted before he has been able to develop a creative will sufficiently conscious to enable him to surmount them. Strange as the spectacle at first is, one finds oneself, growing familiar with it, filled with a sense of the pathos of all these blundering destinies. One's feeling of repulsion in the presence of the individual, often so grossly a "success," transforms itself into a mounting indignation against all the forces that have turned the in-

dividual against himself and left a sandy desert where the flowers of the spirit ought to have grown.

For the literary life is, one has come to realize, governed by a law, a law of growth as consistent as that which governs the growth of a tree. One could prove this by the testimony of those great artists whose sunny or whose tragic old age is at least illumined in moments by a certainty that, however else they have erred, they have fulfilled to the limit of their powers the intention that was born in them. And that law is proved as much in the breach as in the observance. These writers of ours, these popular writers, can not therefore be dismissed as journalists: they can not be dismissed because, recognizing this law as they do, they show that they contain in themselves the root, arrested and deformed, from which the American literature of the future will have to grow. "Please do not think," wrote Mr. Hamlin Garland the other day, "that I am under any illusions as to my own work. I have had so much to contend with that I have only in one or two books had the full leisure and freedom from care which gave me satisfying results. One of these is, of course, 'A Son of the Middle Border'—I took my time to that." Can anyone say that a man capable of writing these words lacks the conscience of the artist, however he has erred against it, that he fails, in short, to recognize the artist's law of growth? And hear Mrs. Mary Roberts Rinehart: "The total result . . . after twelve years, is that I have learned to sit down at my desk and begin work simultaneously. One thing died, however, in those years of readjustment and struggle—that was my belief in what is called 'inspiration.' I think I had it now and then in those days, moments when I felt things I had hardly words for, a breath of something much bigger than I was, a little lift in the veil. It does not come any more." How many of our professional writers have said just that in moments of confidence! And because they feel it, because they know that they have broken the law within themselves (and are, in consequence, essentially pathetic figures), they and their destinies can not be taken lightly by those of us who have the cause of American literature at heart, who believe in the mission of literature.

Suppose we accept the work of our novelists at its face value. One is willing to agree with a recent commentator that Mr. Peter B. Kyne displays "good sense" in writing about "things he understands clearly," which include the lumber trade. By all means, let us have the lumber trade: accurate information, if Mr. Kyne possesses it, is always valuable. Let us have Mr. Joseph C. Lincoln's Cape Cod types and all those intimate facts which Mr. Freeman Tilden tells us a novelist ought to absorb at meetings of the Plumbers' Union and the Longshoremen's Literary Society. Can we know too much even about the merest externals of human nature? But all this bears only the remotest relation to literature, and half the time our novelists know it! In all their superficial arrogance, they realize at moments that they are involved in sloughs of misunderstanding, that they are capable of better things. For Mr. Garland's and Mrs. Rinehart's confessions convince one that, whatever compensations they receive in prestige, money and physical comfort, the writers of our popular fiction do not enjoy their fate. The achievement of prestige and wealth is a satisfaction of the will-to-power, but it is a satisfaction appreciably inferior to that of the consciousness of having fulfilled one's destiny. Mr.

George Gordon, in the preface to one of those strange volumes of confessions that show how anxious the American writer is to explain himself, remarks:

We flatter ourselves that our lives are interesting . . . but they are not. Not even to us, if I am to believe those who make our novels. I appealed to some thirty to tell me of their doings, their ways of work and play; and the answers with few exceptions came in diverse individual words: There is nothing to tell. Now if a man can make nothing out of himself . . . but we are here to make something of ourselves, for the joy of nations and the good of humanity.

It would not have proved anything if, having said that they could make nothing of themselves, the men who make our novels had entered into no further details: one might then have been able to imagine that they were perhaps hiding a light under their bushels. But, alas, they have innocently revealed their heights and depths, and Mr. Gordon is justified in his comment: they and their lives are dull, dull, dull. It is because they are the victims of ignorance, chiefly. They have never sufficiently lived *into* the creative life to know its satisfactions, the satisfaction of registering one's individuality in the midst of the herd, of making one's life *tell*. Otherwise they could never have been bribed by the herd's rewards.

The darkness that enfolds them—for that is the heart of the matter—is, indeed, Cimmerian. Mrs. Atherton, that operatic soul who, from time to time, darts across the American horizon, like a comet running amuck, really seems to believe that she is a great genius: how can she help it when no one has ever effectively told her that she is not one? And think of Mr. Rupert Hughes! Mr. Hughes recently began an autobiographical sketch with a vindication of Henry Fielding, assuring us that those who read Fielding in his own day "took him as a mere entertainer." Mr. Hughes, as I remember, did not say in so many words that he was another Fielding, but he certainly implied it. And why should he not be convinced of it, when the newspapers are always telling him how patriotic he is? Our criticism has much to answer for: indeed, of all the facts of our life that are responsible for the limbo of the magazines, our criticism is the most responsible. May one mention two or three instances in point? The author of "Literature in the Making," a collection of reprinted interviews with various popular American writers which had some vogue two or three years ago, observed, referring to his heroes, in the preface:

They knew that through me they spoke . . . to all the literary apprentices of the country, who look eagerly for precept and example to those who have won fame by the delightful labour of writing. They knew that through me they spoke . . . to the critics and students of literature of our own generation and, perhaps, of those that shall come after us. How eagerly would we read, for instance, an interview with Francis Bacon on the question of the authorship of Shakespeare's plays, or an interview with Oliver Goldsmith in which he gave his real opinion of Dr. Johnson, Garrick and Boswell! A century or so from now, some of the writers who in this book talk to the world may be the objects of curiosity as great.

Why should Mr. Rupert Hughes distinguish between himself and Fielding when American criticism does not do so? How, when this is the normal mode of our criticism, can American writers ever discover what the literary life truly is? And this is the normal mode of American criticism. Glance, for another example, at Mr. Grant Overton's preface to "The Women Who Make Our Novels":

An effort has been made to include in this book all the living American women novelists whose writing, by the customary standards, is artistically fine. An equal effort

has been made to include all the living American women novelists whose writing has attained a wide popularity. The author does not contend, nor will he so much as allow, that the production of writing artistically fine is a greater achievement than the satisfaction of many thousands of readers.

Which is the greater achievement, a paper baloon or a dish of stuffed peppers? Why is a mouse when it spins? And what is the ethic of a criticism that at once confirms the barbarous taste of the public and convinces the author that he has nothing to learn about himself? Mr. Overton had two birds in his bush, and he has killed them both with one stone. And criticism is supposed to be the art of bringing life!

Limbo, the place of lost souls; the world of the magazines, of this accepted American literature of ours, is nothing else or less. And our criticism will continue to merit contempt until it develops in itself powers of redemption.

GOVERNMENT BY FRIGHTFULNESS.

WE have an unhappy trick—the psychologists can tell us its origin and its meaning—of melodramatizing our politics and our history. An unfortunate trick, for, however it may satisfy emotional cravings, it certainly confuses intellectual judgments. Half the follies of the Allied Russian policy have come from this trick of seeing the Revolution as a lurid melodrama, with Lenin as the stage villain. That same unfortunate trick is throwing almost everybody in England and America hopelessly wrong in their judgment of the Indian events that grouped themselves round the massacre of Amritsar. The horror of the slaughter in the Jallianwalla Bagh has so caught the imagination, and is in itself of such dramatic quality, that attention has become focussed upon this one tragic moment, while less vivid but no less important happenings are practically ignored.

General Dyer has become a symbol of savage brutality. He is pictured as a species of homicidal maniac. "It is a fine day, let us go and kill something," says the Englishman of Continental satire. "It is a fine day, let us go and kill a few hundred Indians," says the melodramatized Dyer in the accepted version of Amritsar. While the great majority is painting him an incredibly ferocious and blood-thirsty villain, a minority has cast him for the part of hero. By this select few he becomes the gallant defender of the lives and honour of British women against a horde of Indians lusting to repeat the horrors of the Black Hole and the Ghats of Cawnpore.

Each picture is, of course, absurd. General Dyer, as the Government's enquiry shows him, is neither romantic villain nor romantic hero. He is a rather more than usually stupid soldier-man, plunged suddenly into a situation utterly beyond his comprehension. He was thoroughly frightened—not personally frightened for his own safety, but none the less frightened. He was frightened, just as the Germans at Louvain were frightened in 1914; and like them he became, in his blind fear, recklessly brutal. He did, beyond any doubt, believe: he does still believe—and of course nearly all Anglo-India believes with him—that he was averting a terrible catastrophe in the only possible way. He acted in fact, not inhumanly but very humanly; not like some fantastic fiend, but like a very ordinary human being with very badly shaken nerves and a complete inability to understand what was happening.

This is not of course by way of a defence of General Dyer; it is a suggestion that we should get the

charge against him right; and it is important that we should do so. It has suited the book of the Indian and British Governments very well that Dyer should be accused by public opinion of unnatural cruelty. They have been able to rebuke him sternly for his excessive violence, for "exceeding," as the London *Daily Herald* has put it, "his ration of frightfulness." And so they have been able to placate large numbers of the critics, to divert attention from more important people and also from more fundamental matters. The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Montagu, it is acclaimed loudly, has vindicated the principles of British justice and has shown the world that such "occurrences"—it is his own pretty word—as that of Amritsar are foreign to the whole spirit of British Raj. Mr. Montagu in fact has done no such thing. He has made General Dyer a scapegoat for Lord Chelmsford and Sir Michael O'Dwyer. He has condemned the act, and justified the policy which led naturally and inevitably to it. He has attributed to the inhumanity—or, if it be preferred, the "bad judgment" of the General—a crime which a thousand men of quite normal humanity and judgment would have committed in like circumstances; and he apparently hopes to avoid new Amritsars by changing a General, when in fact they can only be avoided by changing a policy.

The clear underlying fact of it all is that British rule in India is based upon force. Let us, says Mr. Montagu piously, employ the minimum of force necessary. General Dyer employed more than was necessary—"exceeded his ration" in fact: and therefore is to blame. It is a matter of quantity, not of quality. That is a fine Blue Book sentiment for a Minister 5000 miles away. But it is no possible basis of government. Once base a system of government on naked force and you must be prepared to use that force brutally, mercilessly, and without stint. There is no half-way house between government by consent and government by coercion. Small doses of force will irritate where large doses may at least repress. That, indeed, was precisely what happened in the Punjab. The Rowlatt Act—passed in the teeth of the unanimous opposition of the Indian members of the Legislative Council—drove the people to passive resistance and the general strike. The arrest of Mr. Gandhi and the deportation of the Punjab leaders brought angry processions of protest. The firing upon these crowds—Mr. Montagu's minimum properly observed—set them to murder and destruction of property. Then came Jallianwalla Bagh, the bombing of the villages and the rigour of martial law. Dyer's simple soldier-philosophy—far sounder than Mr. Montagu's sophistry—was that when you begin shooting you have got to do the job thoroughly. Else you had better not begin at all.

Quite certainly he is right. The lesson of the story told by the Hunter Report, and by the Report of the Indian Congress sub-committee, is not in the least the villainy of General Dyer, or the desirability of using the "minimum of force." It has been obscured by all the melodrama that has been appreciated by the public and exploited by Mr. Montagu. But it is there plainly enough for anybody who cares to look for it. It is that any nation or any class that insists on maintaining rule by force over an unwilling people must be prepared to shoulder the moral responsibility for Amritsars. If the British Government shrinks from that it must abandon its attempt to hold India by the sword. It must prepare for a swifter transition to self-government than it has ever dared to contem-

plate. The only alternative to new massacres is in fact an immediate revolutionary change in the relationship of England and India, a change which will establish the Government of India not upon the bayonets of a foreign army but upon the consent of the Indian peoples. If that is not done and done swiftly, the British Raj in India will pass through a new series of "unfortunate occurrences" to a catastrophic end. But that is a choice no British Minister can contemplate in comfort. Therefore they prefer to talk about the inhumanity of General Dyer and the pleasant-sounding doctrine of "minimum force." But there is no reason why anybody should aid them to evade the issue.

BIGOTRY AND CLASS-CONSCIOUSNESS.

BEFORE any age can establish a fire-and-burglar-proof claim to enlightenment, it ought first to be sure whether it has really done away with obscurantism or merely altered its mode. A good place to begin inquiry is with the tacit modern assumption that bigotry belongs to the dark ages. Because religious toleration seems to have been finally won for mankind, because a purely religious war today would be an anachronism, it is generally assumed that whatever our defects may be, bigotry is not among them. We may be guilty of occasional puritanical excesses, but everybody recognizes and laughs at them. There may be a few fanatics, a few cranks, a few bigots, even, amongst us, yes; but bigotry as a significant force within society—this is not of the world of 1920.

It is a dangerous assumption. The deep irrational impulses in men making for bigotry have merely shifted their mode of attack. The bigot is to be found among the reactionaries, on the one hand, and among the violent revolutionists, on the other. Between them, in bitter fact, the world of our time is being led to as deadly and wasteful a conflict of the classes as was ever produced by rival religious sects in the Middle Ages; and from what we have already observed of the clashes of the Whites and the Reds in the Europe of the past three years the conclusion is irresistible that this modern warfare is every bit as atrocious and as dehumanizing as any of the struggles of the 14th or 15th centuries. In so far as religious bigotry has been abandoned, we appear only to have transferred its force to what, for want of a better name, we may call economic bigotry; and it is an open question whether the latter is not more inimical to the peace and well-being of society as a whole.

Happily we can now see, from our good vantage point in history the manner in which religious bigotry arose and the manner of its waning. The analogy between its rise and the rise of modern class-warfare is very striking; the suggestion comes spontaneously that the manner of its disappearance may contain some hints for our own increasingly class-torn society.

Religious bigotry arose because men denied that they had common ideals. Not to believe in a given essential doctrine was not merely to be eccentric in one's theology, it was to put oneself outside the pale of human existence. If one did not express an ideal in the established mode and manner of a sect, your community of interest in the ideal itself was ignored or denied. This is the characteristic of bigotry. The simple, obvious idea which began the era of religious toleration was only that we were worshipping the same God, some under one name and form, some under another; but all aspiring to essentially very much the same thing. Men suddenly realized that, religiously

speaking, they all, whatever the mode in which they severally expressed them, had common ideals. That fact, once granted, religious toleration became easy, and the emphasis shifted from the fact of a belief in God to the method by which that fact could most conveniently or effectively be expressed. Religious wars were transformed into theological quarrels, and thenceforth remained to plague no one except those specially interested.

In precisely the same way, modern class-warfare arises because men passionately deny an essential identity of ideals. The revolutionist is always attempting to make the proletariat "class-conscious," which means to make it exclusive in feeling; he is attempting to create a sect which will deny certain human attributes, chief among them a commonality of human aim, to all other men. It is exactly the same performance as that of the fanatical religious proselytizer of the Middle Ages. Similarly, your true-born reactionary, although he does not use the jargon of "class consciousness," nevertheless is arriving at the same results as the revolutionist when he talks of the "scum," the "mob," or the "rabble." He, too, is busy dividing society into mutually-exclusive classes.

The fallacy here is a very old one, and the distinction which resolves it is also a very old one—the distinction between aim and performance. If the modern capitalist, while pretending to act in the interest of society, consciously intended to bring about the evils which modern capitalism too often creates he would be a hypocrite; but such is not the case. The average intelligent capitalist, financier, or big business man of to-day is quite aware that the system does not work perfectly; what makes him defend it, is usually the honest conviction that, bad as it is, any other system would be worse. It is not a case of hypocrisy at all; it is a case chiefly of ignorance, bad judgment, fear—and bigotry. Furthermore, when he finds his motives impugned by the revolutionist, his defence becomes emotional and frenetic; he carries over his own justified grievance to the system of which he is a representative, identifying his personal honesty of aim with capitalism *per se*.

When the revolutionist and the radical return to the older and more humanistic concept of common aim, the bigotry that now accompanies the class-struggle will disappear exactly as the bigotry that accompanied the former religious struggles has already disappeared. Difficult as it may be to do, the most rationally salutary act for the revolutionist is to grant that most of us, whatever class we belong to, have common ideals. The whole conflict is then put in different terms. Let the revolutionist concede a common aim to his opponent, and he will be astonished to find how readily that opponent grants the defects of actual performance. But the greatest advantage is a gain in temper. Radicalism is not promoted by lucidity of mind alone; it is wonderfully helped on by largeness of temper. Relieved from the necessity of working up invective (the chief task of your merely emotional radical as it is of your merely emotional conservative), the revolutionist will find that he is confronted with the really difficult job of ways and means. What the revolutionist needs most to concentrate upon to-day is method and not drama. Under modern conditions human happiness is so complex and precarious an achievement that the technique of attaining it has as yet hardly reached its awkward age; and it will never be attained at all unless somehow the irrelevant and destructive bigotry of the class-struggle can be avoided.

REMINISCENCES OF TOLSTOY: II.

These fragmentary notes were written by me during the period when I lived in Oleise and Leo Nikolaievitch (Tolstoy) at Gaspra in the Crimea. They cover the period of Tolstoy's serious illness and of his subsequent recovery. The notes were carelessly jotted down on scraps of paper, and I thought I had lost them, but recently I have found some of them.—MAXIM GORKY.

WE walked in the Yussopov Park. He spoke superbly about the customs of the Moscow aristocracy. A big Russian peasant woman was working on the flower-bed, bent at right angles, showing her ivory legs, shaking her heavy breasts. He looked at her attentively. "It is those caryatides who have kept all that magnificence and extravagance going. Not only by the labour of peasant men and women, not only by the taxes they pay, but in the literal sense by their blood. If the aristocracy had not from time to time mated with such horse-women as she, they would have died out long ago. It is impossible with impunity to waste one's strength as the young men of my time did. But after sowing their wild oats, many married serf-girls and produced a good breed. In that way, too, the peasant's strength saved them. That strength is everywhere in place. Half the aristocracy always has to spend its strength on itself, and the other half to dilute itself with peasant blood and thus diffuse the peasant blood a little. It's useful."

OF women he talks readily and much, like a French novelist, but always with the coarseness of a Russian peasant. Formerly it used to affect me unpleasantly until I noticed how simply he used these words, as though he knew no more fitting ones to use. Coming from his shaggy lips, they sound simple and natural and lose their soldierly coarseness and filth. I remember my first meeting with him and his talk about "Varyenka Oliessova" and "Twenty-six and One." From the ordinary point of view what he said was a string of indecent words. I was perplexed by it and even offended. I thought that he considered me incapable of understanding any other kind of language. I understand now: it was silly to have felt offended.

HE sat on the stone bench in the shade of the cypresses, looking very lean, small and grey, and yet resembling Jehovah Sabaoth who is a little tired and is amusing himself by trying to whistle in tune with a chaffinch. The bird sang in the darkness of the thick foliage: he peered up at it, screwing up his sharp little eyes and, pursing his lips like a child, he whistled incompetently.

"What a furious little creature! It's in a rage. What bird is it?"

I told him about the chaffinch and its characteristic jealousy.

"All life long one song," he said, "and yet jealous. Man has a thousand songs in his heart and is yet blamed for jealousy; is it fair?" He spoke musingly, as though asking himself questions. "There are moments when a man says to a woman more than she ought to know about him. He speaks and forgets, but she remembers. Perhaps jealousy comes from the fear of degrading one's soul, of being humiliated and ridiculous? Not that a woman is dangerous who holds a man by his lusts but she who holds him by his soul. . . ."

When I pointed out the contradiction in this with his "Kreutzer Sonata," the radiance of a sudden smile beamed through his beard and he said: "I am not a chaffinch."

IN the evening while walking, he suddenly said: "Man survives earthquakes, epidemics, the horrors of disease, and all the agonies of the soul, but for all time his most tormenting tragedy has been, is, and will be—the tragedy of the bedroom."

Saying this, he smiled triumphantly: at times, he has the broad calm smile of a man who has overcome something extremely difficult or from whom some sharp, long-

gnawing pain has lifted suddenly. Every thought burrows into his soul like a tick; he either tears it out at once, or allows it to have its fill of his blood, and then, when full, it just drops off of itself.

HE read to Suler and me a variant of the scene of the fall of "Father Sergius"—a merciless scene. Suler pouted and fidgeted uneasily.

"What's the matter? Don't you like it?" Leo Nikolaievitch asked.

"It's too brutal, as though from Dostoevsky. She is a filthy girl, and her breasts like pancakes, and all that. Why didn't he sin with a beautiful, healthy woman?"

"That would be sin without justification: as it is, there is justification in pity for the girl. Who could desire her as she is?"

"I can not make it out. . . ."

"There's a great deal, Liouvushka, which you can't make out: you're not shrewd. . . ."

There came in Andrey Lvovitch's wife and the conversation was interrupted. As she and Suler went out, Leo Nikolaievitch said to me: "Leopold is the purest man I know. He is like that: if he did something bad, it would be out of pity for someone."

HE talks most of God, of peasants, and of woman. Of literature rarely and little, as though literature were something alien to him. Woman, in my opinion, he regards with implacable hostility and loves to punish her, unless she be a Kittie or Natasha Rostov, i.e., a creature not too narrow. It is the hostility of the male who has not succeeded in getting all the pleasure he could, or it is the hostility of spirit against "the degrading impulses of the flesh." But it is hostility, and cold as in "Anna Karenin." Of "the degrading impulses of the flesh" he spoke well on Sunday in a conversation with Chekhov and Yelpatievsky about Rousseau's "Confessions." Suler wrote down what he said, and later, while preparing coffee, burnt it in the spirit-lamp. Once before he burnt Leo Nikolaievitch's opinions on Ibsen, and he also lost the notes of the conversation in which Leo Nikolaievitch said very pagan things on the symbolism of the marriage ritual, agreeing to a certain extent with V. V. Rosanov.

IN the morning some "stundists" came to Tolstoy from Feodosia, and to-day all day long he spoke about peasants with rapture. At lunch: "They came both so strong and fleshy; says one: 'Well, we've come uninvited,' and the other says: 'With God's help, we shall leave unbeaten.'" And he broke out into child-like laughter, shaking all over.

After lunch, on the terrace: "We shall soon cease completely to understand the language of the people. Now we say 'the theory of progress,' 'the rôle of the individual in history,' 'the evolution of science'; and a peasant says: 'you can't hide an awl in a sack'; and all theories, histories, evolutions become pitiable and ridiculous, because they are incomprehensible and unnecessary to the people. But the peasant is stronger than we; he is more tenacious of life, and there may happen to us what happened to the tribe of Atzurs, of whom it was reported to a scholar: 'All the Atzurs have died out, but there is a parrot here who knows a few words of their language.'"

"WITH her body, woman is more sincere than man; but with her mind, she lies. And when she lies, she does not believe herself; but Rousseau lied and believed his lies."

"DOSTOIEVSKY described one of his mad characters as living and taking vengeance on himself and others because he had served a cause in which he did not believe. He wrote that about himself; that is, he could have said the same of himself."

"SOME of the words used in our church are amazingly obscure: what meaning is there, for instance, in the words: 'That earth is God's and the fulness thereof?' That is not Holy Scripture, but a kind of popular scientific materialism."

"But you explained the words somewhere," said Suler.

"Many things are explained. . . . 'An explanation does not go up to the hilt.'"

And he gave a cunning little smile.

HE likes putting difficult and malicious questions: What do you think of yourself? Do you love your wife? Do you think my son, Leo, has talent? How do you like Sophie Andreievna? [Tolstoy's wife.] To lie to him is impossible.

Once he asked: "Are you fond of me, Alexei Maximovitch?" This is the maliciousness of a "bogaty" [a hero in Russian legend, brave but wild and self-willed like a child]: Vaska Buslayev played just such pranks in his youth, mischievous fellow. He is experimenting, all the time testing something, as if he were going to fight. It is interesting, but not much to my liking. He is the devil, and I am still a babe, and he should leave me alone.

PERHAPS peasant to him means merely—bad smell. He always feels it, and involuntarily has to talk of it.

LAST night I told him of my battle with General Kornet's wife; he laughed until he cried and he got a pain in his side and groaned and kept on crying out in a thin scream:

"With the shovel! On the bottom with the shovel, eh? Right on the bottom! Was it a broad shovel?"

Then, after a pause, he said seriously: "It was generous in you to strike her like that; any other man would have struck her on the head for that. Very generous! You understood that she wanted you?"

"I don't remember. I hardly think that I can have understood."

"Well, now! But it's obvious. Of course she wanted you."

"I did not live for that then."

"Whatever you may live for; it's all the same. You are evidently not much of a lady's man. Anyone else in your place would have made his fortune out of the situation, would have become a landed proprietor and have ended by making one of a pair of drunkards."

After a silence: "You are funny—don't be offended—very funny. And it's very strange that you should still be good-natured when you might well be spiteful. . . . Yes, you might well be spiteful. . . . You're strong . . . that's good. . . ."

And after another silence; he added thoughtfully: "Your mind I don't understand—it's a very tangled mind—but your heart is sensible . . . yes, a sensible heart."

I ASKED him: "Do you agree with Poznyshiev [in "Kreutzer Sonata"] when he says that doctors have destroyed and are destroying thousands and hundreds of thousands of people?"

"Are you very anxious to know?"

"Very."

"Then I shan't tell you."

And he smiled, playing with his thumbs.

I remember in one of his stories he makes a comparison between a quack village "vet." and a doctor of medicine: "The words 'giltchak,' 'potchetchny,' 'blood-letting' [words used by quack "vets." for the diseases of horses], are not they precisely the same as nerves, rheumatism, organisms, etc.?"

And this was written after Jenner, Behring, Pasteur. It is perversity!

How strange that he is so fond of playing cards. He plays seriously, passionately. His hands become nervous when he takes the cards up, exactly as if he were holding live birds instead of inanimate pieces of cardboard.

MAXIM GORKY.

THE BIRTH OF THE THIRD PARTY.

DELEGATES to the third-party convention in Chicago may well be asking themselves what went we out for to see—and to do? To try to reform the present system or to revolutionize it? The liberals were there for reform; the radicals for revolution—a revolution in the political and economic life of this country, to be achieved, not by violence and bloodshed, but through political action and the ballot. By adopting by a three to one vote the platform submitted by the majority group of the joint platform committee, the rank and file of the Labour party and of the Committee of Forty-eight proved clearly enough that they had come to Chicago not for political reform but for economic and political revolution. Men and women were there from every section of America with one ideal, to help form a third party which would take political power from the two old parties, and thereby take from our industrial and financial masters the two great instrumentalities through which they work their will upon us in government and industry. These men and women were determined to set forth a programme of political and economic action which would destroy privilege, reduce the high cost of living and give to the workers by hand and brain the control of mines and all natural resources, of basic industries, of the means of transportation and distribution, and of the functions of government itself.

Contrary to the statements of some prominent leaders and contrary to the impression created by the newspaper press, such a third party was formed, and such a programme was adopted by a vote of 345 to 108 of the combined rank and file of the Labour party, the farmers' organizations, and the Committee of Forty-eight. A few of the leaders of the Forty-eighters who could not agree to the programme as adopted, though it was enthusiastically accepted by a substantial majority of their own followers, are said by the newspapers to have "bolted" the new ticket, but as a matter of plain fact they are accompanied on their return trip into the political wilderness by so few of their rank and file that their defection is not likely to affect the fortunes of the new party. If one may be permitted to speculate as to the reason why these leaders are so sad and disillusioned at the outcome of the Chicago convention, one would hazard the suggestion that they had formed very strong and definite views as to the character of the programme that was to be adopted, and as to the character of the leadership of the new party, without ever consulting the rank and file of their own organization, or even trying to gauge its views. These leaders arrived in Chicago with a ready-made programme, but altogether lacking the political knowledge and experience necessary to win acceptance for their views or to give them effect in the formation of a new party.

It is revealing no secret to say that while these gentlemen were spending weary nights in interminable arguments with the leaders of the Labour party over points of difference which ought to have been settled, or agreed upon as points of difference, weeks before the convention assembled, the rank and file of the Committee of Forty-eight, impatient of the delay, took the duties of the leadership into their own hands, and unanimously decided to enter into joint conference with the delegates of the Labour party; and then when united in one convention proceeded to adopt a programme differing in several important particulars from that which the still debating leaders of the Forty-eighters were willing to adopt.

The situation presents a curious reversal of what took place at the conventions of the Democratic and Republican parties where "the old guard" were in full control; on this occasion however "the old guard" of the Committee of Forty-eight, who are still living in the far-off ages of individualism before the dawn of our modern industrial era, were deserted in broad daylight by their own followers, with the quaint result that these leaders promptly announced to the world that it was they who were doing the bolting! There has been nothing quite like this since Messrs. Potash and Perlmutter fired their salesman who thereupon went around telling all his friends that he was leaving the firm "by mutual consent."

The statement has been made that the programme of the "bolting leaders" was as radical a programme as any that could be adopted. But this can hardly be the case in view of the signed statements that have been issued by Mr. Record, Mr. Pinchot and Mr. McCurdy to the effect that the programme adopted by the joint convention was too radical for their, or the public's consumption. After days and nights of conference between the leaders of the two groups, the leaders of the Committee of Forty-eight agreed to all the planks in the Labour party's programme with the exception of the following:

1. A plank advocating the Plumb Plan.
2. A plank for the nationalization of mines.
3. A plank for a levy on capital.

There had been a long drawn out argument over the Labour party's plank demanding the democratic control of industry. In its original form in the Labour party platform this plank read as follows:

Democratic Control of Industry. The right of labour to an ever increasing share in the responsibilities and management of industry; application of this principle to be developed in accordance with the experience of actual operation.

But Mr. Record and Mr. Pinchot at first opposed this proposal in its entirety. Later they agreed to its inclusion if in place of the words "ever-increasing" some general word like "democratic" were substituted. The Labour leaders rejected this amendment. Then Mr. Record suggested that the word "effective" be substituted. Mr. Robert Buck, the chairman of the Labour group again objected. "What do you mean by effective?" he asked, and proceeded to charge the leaders of the Committee with not believing in genuine democratic control at all. "In any given experiment," he said, "your judgment as to whether or not labour's control was effective would be substituted for the progressive fulfillment of labour's determination eventually to take over the responsibilities and management of all industry. Organized labour is not advocating any sudden upset of industry for we state in our plank 'application of this principle to be developed in accordance with the experience of actual operation.'" For this excellent reason the Labour group rejected the word "effective," but agreed to drop the word "ever" before "increasing." In this form the plank on democratic control was substantially conceded by the leaders of the Forty-eighters.

The Labour group in a spirit of conciliation then met the Forty-eight leaders part way by giving up any reference to the Plumb Plan and any other specific nationalization plan, and accepted a general plank for "government ownership and democratic operation of the railroads." Later in order to bring about an honourable agreement between the two groups, and on my own urging in a special conference with them, the

Labour leaders agreed to withdraw their demand for "a levy on capital."

This left in dispute only the plank advocating the "nationalization of mines." But it should be remembered that never once during the whole period of these negotiations was there any time when on these points of difference, the leaders of the Committee of Forty-eight would have been sustained in their own convention by a majority of their own delegates.

Even Senator LaFollette's proposed programme was rewritten by his representatives in order to meet the views of all groups on all essential planks except on the question of the nationalization of mines. But the Senator's representatives said that in the Labour platform there were too many additional planks and details for the Senator to feel it was politically expedient for him to run on the platform as revised. The leaders of the Forty-eighters eagerly took up this statement of the Senator's representatives hoping to secure further concessions from the Labour group. But at last, after a long night of negotiation and debate, the chairman of the Labour group declared to the joint committee, "We want Senator LaFollette as our candidate just as much as you of the Committee of Forty-eight want him, but we do not want even Senator LaFollette as much as we want our programme. And so we now refuse to make any further concessions either to bring about harmony between the groups or to get the Senator."

I should like to say in this connexion that in the judgment of everybody Senator LaFollette acted from the beginning toward all groups with the highest honour and frankness. He had said clearly at the outset that he could not be a candidate unless there was a complete union of mind and view among the groups represented at the convention. Since my return from Chicago I have wondered what the Senator's attitude would have been had he realized first, that an overwhelming majority of the rank and file of the Labour party and of the Committee of Forty-eight were in complete agreement on a programme and second, that whatever disagreement there was existed only in the minds of a corporal's guard of "bolting" leaders whose leadership had, in fact, already been rejected by their own followers. Had these two facts been known to the Senator away there on his Wisconsin farm I wonder whether he would not have accepted the nomination of the joint convention.

The new party is launched, let nobody be deceived about that. It is assured of the loyal and enthusiastic support of the organized miners, the steel workers, and the textile workers of New England. It has the backing of stalwart, practical labour leaders like John Fitzpatrick and Edward Nockel, the heads of the great Chicago Federation of Labour, of James Duncan of Seattle and the labour-movement in the great north-west and of Rose Schneiderman, nationally and internationally known as one of the leaders of the organized women-workers of America. It has the endorsement of the A. F. of L. of Pennsylvania. It has behind it the farmers of Minnesota, North Dakota and many other States whose delegates remained in the joint convention until its close. It has chosen as its candidate Mr. Parley Christensen, an able and devoted supporter of the radical movement, a man of sterling qualities, who is well equipped to expound the party's programme and is well able to hold more than his own with the leaders of the Republican and Democratic parties. It is interesting to note, by the way, that Mr. Christensen was chosen by the "bolting" leaders

themselves as permanent chairman of the convention of the Committee of Forty-eight. In choosing Max Hayes for the Vice-Presidency it has chosen one of the most progressive labour leaders in the country. When the new movement, well named as the Farmer-Labour party, carries its honest and searching programme before the people, the citizenry of this country will see that a live and vigorous new party has been launched which is not a class-party except as it is the party of every man and woman who by hand or brain creates the wealth out of which he or she lives.

DUDLEY FIELD MALONE.

THOREAU THE RADICAL.

It is commonly supposed that Henry David Thoreau was purely a naturalist, or, in less forbidding terminology, a "nature writer"—that he was only, as he wrote, "A self-appointed inspector of snowstorms and rainstorms . . . ; surveyor, if not of highways, then of forest paths and all across-lot routes, keeping them open, and ravines bridged and passable in all seasons, where the public heel had testified to their utility."

This popular fallacy need not occasion surprise. The first compilers of those omniscient and ubiquitous books of "prose composition for school and college," being too busy to read "Walden" through to the end (and who to-day remembers that Thoreau wrote anything else?), and knowing that Thoreau's social foibles must not be taken seriously especially in school and college, tore out his description of Walden Pond in winter, and his story of the battle of the ants, and let it go at that. Years later, their students, arriving at the point where they, too, might compile books of "prose composition for school and college," and being also busy themselves, wisely drew from the books they had studied in their youth—and so the vicious circle continues. Of course, a few students, charmed by the extracts thus vouchsafed to them, turned eagerly to "Walden" itself; but finding the first sixty pages devoted not to an account of the joys of camping out but to such dreary things as economics and philosophy, slandering all that they considered to have been settled long ago, shut up the book with a bang, and went on their way through life prattling of "Thoreau, the nature-writer." They would have done better to have girded up their loins and seen the volume through; remembering that "heroic books, even if printed in the character of our mother tongue, will always be in a language dead to degenerate times."

Thoreau was, indeed, a naturalist, though John Burroughs has politely gone to some pains to search out his inaccuracies. The fact is that although Thoreau did prowl round the woods of Concord, visiting White Pond, Flint's Pond, Fair Haven Bay, and the rest, he regarded nature only as a means to a very definite end; he regarded it as a fairly solid foundation for a philosophy—"the perennial source of our life."

Forsooth, a harmless sort of man:

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and to see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether

it is of the devil or of God, and have somewhat hastily concluded that it is the chief end of man here to "glorify God and enjoy him forever."

And so to our amazement in this year of grace and enlightenment, 1920, we discover this odd fellow, living of all places in Concord, Massachusetts, in the heart of chill New England, the graduate of Harvard College—to be a radical—a stupendous radical! Talk of Samuel Butler, Anatole France, Bernard Shaw—to this original who lived so close to the earth, not one of the artifices of society was sacred.

Are you blustering about capital and labour?

I can not believe that our factory system is the best mode by which men may get clothing. The condition of the operatives is becoming every day more like that of the English; and it can not be wondered at, since, as far as I have heard or observed, the principal object is, not that mankind may be well and honestly clad, but, unquestionably, that the corporations may be enriched.

Do you think that something is amiss with college education?

Those things for which the most money is demanded are never the things which the student most wants. Tuition, for instance, is an important item on the term bill, while for the more valuable education which he gets by associating with the most cultivated of his contemporaries no charge is made.

Are you a trifle vexed with our reactionaries?

I sometimes despair of getting anything quite simple and honest done in this world by the help of men. They would have to be passed through a powerful press first, to squeeze their old notions out of them, so that they would not soon get upon their legs again; and then there would be some one in the company with a maggot in his head, hatched from an egg deposited there nobody knows when, for not even fire kills these things, and you would have lost your labour.

But why quote the entire volume? Yet these were mere bubbles upon the surface of the cauldron which Thoreau set boiling over the fireplace of his cabin, back there in 1845. What concerned him most, was the pretentiousness of mankind, the fuss and feathers and fury, the pushing, shoving, trampling, grasping to get at the high table, and then the insipidity of the victuals served there. What risibilities he would have found in our world of to-day. One day we extol idealism to the skies; the next it is less idealism we want and more of the practical. One day soft tears are shed over a heroic nation "bled white"; the next it is branded as militaristic. In such a world, what are we to do with a crazy chap on the shore of a pond who spent many an hour "floating over its surface as a zephyr willed, having paddled my boat to the middle, and lying on my back across the seats, in a summer forenoon, dreaming awake, until I was aroused by the boat touching the sand, and I arose to see what shore my fates had impelled me to; days when idleness was the most attractive and productive industry"? What are you going to do with such a fellow?

"Our life is frittered away by detail," said Thoreau. "Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity!"

Hardly a man takes a half hour's nap after dinner, but when he wakes up he holds up his head and asks, 'What's the news?' as if the rest of mankind had stood his sentinels. Some give directions to be waked every half-hour, doubtless for no other purpose; and then, to pay for it, they tell what they have dreamed. . . . There was such a rush, as I hear, the other day at one of the offices to learn the foreign news by the last arrival, that several large squares of the plate glass belonging to the establishment were broken by the pressure—news which I seriously think a ready wit might write a twelvemonth or twelve years beforehand with sufficient accuracy.

Not that Thoreau wanted everyone to follow in his footsteps. Indeed, he himself left the woods after two years because he had several more lives to live.

Throughout these years his feet were on solid ground; they had sunk down through the quick-sand of human prejudice. A naturalist, a "nature-writer" he was—so that he might be the more honest man, guiltless of obscuring the truth by clouds of pretence and passion.

J. BROOKS ATKINSON.

THE FREE LANCE'S OPPORTUNITY.

THE regimentation of society goes on apace! In ever larger groups, industrial forces are being welded into mighty armies. Labour-organizations, faced by the necessity of protecting their members from soaring prices, are reaching out into commercial activities, setting up co-operative stores, providing insurance, hospital care and the like. The influence of these great aggregations of labour extends into every phase of the life of the nation. Meanwhile, the forces of capital and ownership are not idle. Chain stores, each exactly like its fellow, stretch, link by profitable link, all over the land and are beginning to take on an international scope. Like the monastic communities of old, modern industrial power comprehends, not only the work itself, but the housing, feeding, amusing, edifying and educating of the workers, the curing of them when they are sick and the burying of them when they die. Even modern charity is so organized that a lost motion is as rare as a stray emotion.

Standardization runs through everything, transportation, industry, commerce, finance. The mighty power which lies in newspaper-ownership is becoming centralized; magazinedom has its piled-up units, with circulations mounting into millions, each cut after a certain pattern, with well drilled staffs that turn out the product asked for with machine-like regularity and of a quality that suits the mass-mind. Editors ask for "something like the article you wrote for us last year." The publisher seeks for "another like the last." In the world of literature it is the same story. Writers are tempted to put on the gilded chains of contracts, agreements, understandings, binding them to work exclusively for this or that magazine or publisher. The rewards for such surrenders are not slight, but the recipient must consent to be brayed in the mortar of intensive production and repeat himself to the *n*th time. Everywhere the cry is still "More, more, more, of the standard goods." Meantime, inventions that would make scrap iron of established machinery are purchased, and pigeonholed. Plans for improvement are laid aside because they would interfere with present profit. Industry's sole aim is to multiply its products; quantity is the sole demand.

The effect of all this is becoming apparent in all the ways of life. The worker, trained to an orderly routine in getting his work done, gives ready obedience to the cry of "Line up!" as he waits for his place in the trolley-car or for his turn for groceries at the chain-store. Accustomed to regimentation in office or workshop, he, and she no less, seems to wish for nothing else. Relieved by ingenious machinery of the necessity for thought, the worker goes through his or her daily routine and then is rushed home to a custom-made house or apartment, eats a meal served out of tin cans, listens awhile to canned jazz, and then goes to sleep on a bed that is made to look like a sofa in the daytime . . . perchance to dream. But there is no health in these regimented masses. They grind and grind and produce an ocean of shoddy. The stuff may be veneered with enamel, tricked out with dye or print or embroidery, but it is shoddy.

And yet, here and there, beauty still lives, thank God. The other day I saw a brass vase made by a soldier as he waited in his rat hole in the trenches. The design and the whole fashioning of the thing were his. It was a free expression of the man's individual soul. There are in all lands others who, in the purgatory of war, have learned to use their hands and brains in creative efforts. To-day, released from the machine by wounds or by their rebellious souls, they are producing things of beauty, salty with the tang of new life, strange carvings in wood, bold designs for textiles, new weaves of cloth, pictures, poetry, inventions. Their fight now is against the deadly inertia and blindness of the many-headed. These are the men who will create the new way of living; the thinkers who will give the mould of new ideas which will supplant the present foolish and terrifying habit of mass-repetition.

The coming years are destined to witness a bitter war between the smugly satisfied of to-day and the divinely discontented of to-morrow. The free lance is the prophet of the new era.

GEORGE GILBERT.

MISCELLANY.

My friends had put me in a delightful bedroom with windows facing the Sound, where through a vista of superb tulip-trees, over grounds thick with laurel and rhododendron, I could see the shore of Connecticut shining like a band of silver ribbon. The view carried my mind quietly back to another scene in Middlesex far down the Edgware Road, that I saw years ago when Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree took me into the country to see a property he thought of buying. The place was one of great romantic interest, called Canons, the site of the palace of the Duke of Chandos, surely the most wonderful white elephant that even a spendthrift duke ever took on. No vestige of the palace remained on the day we visited the spot; it was pulled down after the Duke's death in 1744. When Chandos built his palace at Canon's Park, he hoped to make a private road from it to his town-house in Cavendish Square. He was a duke who did things in the grand style. Händel was employed by him for a long time; he finished his oratorio "Esther" while at Canons. Pope, too, was a friend of his, and no doubt "Timon's Villa" in the Epistle to the Earl of Burlington refers to Canons, and the line "This gracious Chandos is beloved at sight" is meant for the Duke. Tree told me that Diomed, the first winner of the Derby, was buried on the premises. Tree, however, never took the place; and some time afterward it fell into the hands of Sir Arthur du Cros who built a very elaborate Roman villa on the site of the old house. One night, very late, he drove me down there from London, and I found a glorious scene in full moonlight, from my bedroom window.

SUCH were the memories brought back to me, perhaps more than anything by the tulip trees and rhododendrons, as I stretched myself out in an easy-chair in my friend's summer home on Long Island; thus the mind triumphs over time and space and death. People who have passed away, scenes thousands of miles apart, incidents long forgotten, the cadence and intonation of voices long since stilled, are all connected with the living present by the continuous chain of association.

THEN, later, as I pottered about the room, I glanced along some bookshelves near my bed, and my eye fell on a set of Stephen Phillips's poems and plays. It was his play "Ulysses" which drew Tree and me together at the time we went down to Canons. Tree had asked me to look it over with a view to production; but when the time came to begin rehearsals, Phillips had only com-

pleted the first act, part of the third, and a scene or two of the second. Here he got stuck, bothered by the technical difficulties of staging the scenes in Hades. The rehearsals had to be postponed, and Clyde Fitch's "The Last of the Dandies" was put on in place of "Ulysses," which, however, was gotten through with and produced some time later.

TREE and Phillips were delightful companions and have left many charming memories behind them. Phillips was not a great poet—the age was against it—yet in the time when great English poetry was at an end, when the spiritual east wind had set in and the sky over our heads was of iron and brass, he did redeem something of the beauty and excellence of our standard verse. His plays have passages of exquisite workmanship; in "Herod," "Paola and Francesca," and in "Ulysses," too, there are lines that show the quality of Keats. "Herod," indeed, is near to great poetic drama; it just misses achievement. Tree was in many respects highly endowed, witty, shrewd, fascinating and a keen observer; and as an actor he did some really great things. There never was a Malvolio like his; for conceit, pomposity and superciliousness, it remains one of the amazing characterizations of the Shakespearean gallery. In his busy career as actor and manager, Tree seemed never to find time to play the part of a country gentleman, and take his ease among green fields and scenic magnificence such as we saw that day at Canons. The last time I saw him, not long before he died, he looked tired and ill, but he was the same lively companion and jovial story-teller. I did not think he would pass away so soon.

Nor to like the movies has always seemed to me a kind of silly snobbery. One may rightly despair of the standards and values of life revealed in the ordinary photodrama, and there can be no doubt that the movies exercise far too great an influence, to the abandonment of good taste and good reading, upon the younger generation which is movie-mad. The normal high-school girl of to-day would rather be a movie-star than a great "legitimate" actress, and the normal high-school boy would rather be a second Douglas Fairbanks than a captain of industry or even President of the United States. But quite aside from the news-weeklies, the so-called educational and scenic films (often extremely interesting and informative and sometimes beautiful), and the more glorious slap-stick comedies, which form really intelligent entertainment for anybody, the photodrama itself, which after all is still the bulk of the films produced and distributed, has certain uses. I know a leading anthropologist in New York and a doctor of mediæval philosophy at Harvard who go regularly to the movies for relaxation, as they put it, just as it is for the ordinary man. The movies introduce us to an unreal, fantastic world, and after a hard day's intellectual work, exactly as after a day of hard manual work, they furnish a sort of anodyne to the cares and troubles of the day. This function is served whether they are seen with the languid and amused interest of the sophisticated or with the pathetic seriousness of the more innocent.

THERE is one other value in the photo-drama, extrinsic rather than intrinsic, yet of consummate importance to the student or historian of contemporary culture. To the averaged harassed citizen of these days, the movie-house represents the spot where dreams come true. If you would know the real quality of those dreams and secret wishes, whether sentimental, tender, heroic, absurd, or merely sordid and materialistic, you must watch the photo-dramas and observe the subtle changes in manner, subject and interest. The movies supply the student with a constant free Freudian psycho-analysis of the American soul of 1920.

Is there not something significant about the fact that censorship of books and plays, as practised in English-

speaking countries, had its origin in the king's fool? The office of master of the revels evolved from the function of the jester, and, under Elizabeth, this master became the dramatic censor. Finally, the abuses that arose prompted the demand for statutory regulation. Early in the eighteenth century Lord Chesterfield said, "If the players are to be punished, let it be by the laws of their country, and not by the will of an irresponsible despot." Since that time, in England, plays require a license from the lord chamberlain or, at least, a play may not be produced if that person makes objection within seven days of the submission of a manuscript. The vagaries of the modern English censorship are illustrated by the banning of such plays as Oscar Wilde's "Salome" and Maeterlinck's "Monna Vanna," on the one hand, and Gilbert and Sullivan's "Mikado" on the other. Laurence Housman, well-known to *Freeman* readers, some ten years ago wrote a play dealing with George IV, which was accorded the honour of being forbidden. There is no record of plays about George V., but newspaper readers may remember that the British Government found other means than the lord chamberlain's office in dealing with fiction by one Mylius regarding that monarch. In America we are not even abreast of the England of 1545, for we still piously refuse to concede the existence of a censorship, while we cheerfully submit to the unregulated exercise and abuse of the power that accompanies it. The jester of 1545 functions to-day in these United States as a police lieutenant or a post-office inspector.

JOURNEYMAN.

POETRY.

AS WE FORGIVE.

Before Thy children, Lord, were fully grown,
They bowed like suppliants at their Maker's throne
And prayed, like slaves, that mercy might be shown.

They knelt before Thee, pleading in the night,
That Thou wouldst wash their scarlet raiment white.
Now, in the dawn, at last they stand upright.

Not with irreverent hearts, yet unafraid,
The silent, helpless myriads Thou hast made,
Give Thee the gifts for which, of old, they prayed:

Compassion for the burden Thou must bear;
And, though they know not why these evils were,
Their mute forgiveness for the griefs they share.

Yes, for one human grief that still must be
Too sad for heaven, too tragical for Thee,
Who even in death wast sure of victory;

For those farewells that darken our brief day,
The child struck down, the young love torn away,
And those dear hopes that kiss us to betray;

For perishing youth, for beauty's fading eyes;
For all Thyself hast given us in such wise
That, ere we grasp its loveliness, it dies,

Dies and despite our faith, we are not sure.
Our love, oh God, was never so secure
As Thine, in Thy strong heaven which must endure.

So, in our human weakness, for the scorn
And scourging, for the bitter cross of thorn
That this dark earth, from age to age has borne,

We—Thy clay creatures—warped and marred and blind,
Stretch out our arms at last, and bid Thee find
Rest to Thy soul, in crucified mankind.

Come to us! Leave Thy deathless realms on high.
We tell Thee, as our dumb dark myriads die,
We do absolve Thee, with our last sad cry.

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ALFRED NOYES.

SCIENCE.

THE FATHER OF EUGENICS.

A FEW weeks ago preparations were resumed for the long-delayed Eugenics Congress, now set for next year. With the Galton centenary following closely in its wake, eugenics will be very much in the air for some time to come. Thinking people will be forced to consider its tenets and to take a definite stand towards its propaganda. They will do well to go back of the modern Galtonians to the master himself. For while Marx's dictum that he was not a Marxist hardly rings quite true, Galton might in all sincerity dissociate himself from not a few of his disciples.

What manner of man, then, was Francis Galton? He was, first of all, a typical Briton in the external circumstances of his life and of his intellectual growth. Like his first cousin Charles Darwin, he lacked the training of a specialist. A medical course begun in deference to his father's wishes was never completed; and the higher mathematical studies pursued in the commencement of his Cambridge days were abandoned because of ill-health. It was only after years of indulgence in aimless travel and the sportsmanship of a country squire that Galton settled down to the execution of scientific tasks. He was, in short, anything but a professor. As a gentleman of leisure he roamed as he listed over the field of knowledge. With the scantiest preparation he achieved a remarkable trip of exploration through what was subsequently German Southwest Africa. This experience naturally plunged him into problems of geographical and meteorological research. A knack for mechanics impelled him to devise or perfect all manner of scientific apparatus. Finally came his epoch-making contributions to psychology, anthropology, and the theory of evolution, culminating in an ambitious scheme for the improvement of the human species. Thus there were not many branches of science to which he did not sooner or later render estimable service. As Professor Karl Pearson has felicitously pointed out, the salient feature in Galton's make-up was an insatiable *Wanderlust*: "He left others to settle and develop; his joy was in rapid pioneer work in a wide range of fields." In short, the impressive feature in Galton's writings lies not in any systematic elaboration, but in his freshness of outlook and the amazing wealth of his ideas. In this respect he recalls perhaps more than any other writer the equally original and versatile genius of Gustav Theodor Fechner.

These two men are indeed linked by more specific resemblances. Both succeeded in applying exact methods to fields where hitherto mere speculation had reigned supreme. Fechner transformed psychology from a branch of metaphysics into an experimental science, whose data he attacked with the aid of the calculus. Galton, though inferior in his technical equipment, was likewise of an eminently mathematical turn of mind. Where other Darwinians were content to recognize factors of evolution and to balance their effects by conjecture, he proceeded to quantitative measurement. "Heredity," "variability," "correlation" ceased to be vague catchwords and became amenable to the laws of probability. When Galton's technique proved inadequate, he inspired others to forge the machinery required for solving his difficulties.

There was a further similarity to Fechner in Gal-

ton's alert and prying curiosity about all the manifestations of the human psyche. No oddity seemed too trivial for accurate observation and comparative treatment. He found that the apparently freakish association of numbers with all sorts of conceptions, such as the idea that Twelve is a motherly old person or that One must be male, is widespread, though the specific ideas associated are far from uniform. The same was found to hold true of colours. What Galton did was consistently to apply the evolutionary principle of variability to the phenomena of mind. And he did more. He showed that in large measure these apparently elusive, intangible data could be grouped under a law. Just as in any population the greatest number conform closely to the general average of stature, tall and short people becoming increasingly rare as they depart more widely from that norm, so it proved possible to grade individuals with reference to all sorts of psychological traits. A few persons have a marvelous gift of visualization, others almost completely lack that power, and the bulk of any group occupies an intermediate position.

The effect of stressing these individual differences was truly revolutionary. Henceforth it was impossible to treat the psyche as an unchangeable substance that could be described in general terms. Every mental trait was seen to correspond to a whole gamut of graded values; every individual appeared as a unique combination of traits, occupying one position among his mates with reference to his visual powers, another as regards his auditory memory, and so forth. If modern pedagogy treats each child as a creature *sui generis* and strives to adapt itself to his individual needs, it is merely building on the theoretical foundations laid down by Galton.

Through examining the extreme variations encountered in a psychological survey Galton was led to originate that branch of research which some scholar, contemptuous of linguistic proprieties, has dubbed "geniology"—the natural history of genius. It was in this field that Galton was most powerfully impressed with the influence of heredity. The conspicuously favourable variations in individual ability proved to be not freaks of nature but hereditary phenomena. Again and again it appeared that famous men had sprung from a stock with considerably greater than average endowments. To-day the proposition seems commonplace enough, but the argument of Galton's book on "Hereditary Genius" must be viewed in historical perspective. In his "Memories," written forty years later, he has himself supplied us with the essential facts. When he first dealt with the hereditary transmission of ability, people were perhaps willing to concede the patent power of inheritance over man's bodily constitution. But to suppose that the same laws which ruled his lower self also governed his spiritual nature seemed little short of sacrilegious; and even those free from theological bias might balk at the notion that there were organic limitations which neither the highest purpose nor the most zealous industry could surmount.

Galton, accordingly, concentrated all his efforts on establishing the cardinal point that ability was transmitted in definite lines of descent. His book thus came to consist largely of the records of families that had given rise to eminent men. This method required the use of a vast mass of information, which it was hardly possible to check in every detail; in fact, Galton was, on the whole, content to accept at their face value the current ratings of distinguished individuals. Obviously

a careful re-examination of these estimates would have been a desideratum. But his work suffered from a fault of omission as well. Nowhere is there an attempt to penetrate into the mechanism of intellectual ability, nowhere an effort to define the individuality of a particular genius. Wonderfully suggestive as the book remains, it can not therefore take rank as a definitive biology of greatness but must be supplemented by such intensive researchers as Ostwald essayed in his sketches of scientific worthies or Pearson in his life of Galton himself.

"Hereditary Genius" already contains explicitly the basic principle of eugenics—the doctrine that inborn dispositions exert a far more powerful influence on individual achievement than education. In the sense that Nurture can never supply what is lacking in Nature this contention is thoroughly borne out by the progress of knowledge. But in the enthusiasm of his discovery Galton completely ignored or minimized the influence of the social environment. Perceiving the golden age of Athenian civilization and its downfall, he did not hesitate to assume that the change was due to racial degeneration. The glory of Athens, he argued, resulted from an innate superiority of the Athenians: judging their endowments by the list of illustrious names during the Periclean period, he inferred that the population was as greatly superior to the modern English as the latter are to the Negro. If they fell from this high estate, it was because through laxity of morals they came to intermarry with inferior aliens, thus lowering the racial quality of their descendants.

This argumentation is a tissue of antiquated fallacies, but as it continues to be quoted with approval, even by some otherwise sane scholars, it can not be ignored. In the first place, modern psychology and anthropology have hitherto failed to demonstrate a decisive superiority of the Caucasian over the Negro race. Secondly, Galton's exorbitant appraisal of Periclean culture is merely the uncritical re-echoing of the adulation lavished on antiquity by our philological drill-masters. Galton cites Phidias and Socrates as prodigies without peer in later Europe. Artistic achievement can not readily be estimated in objective terms, but as for Socrates it is sheer nonsense to decree his unequivocal supremacy over Newton, Descartes or Kant. The total list of Attic greatness remains highly creditable but it is in no sense unique: the nations that within a single century, and in the scientific field alone, produced a Faraday, a Maxwell and a Kelvin; a Helmholtz, a Johannes Müller and a Karl Ernst von Baer; a Laplace, a Lagrange and a D'Alembert—can laugh to scorn the rodomontades about an innate supremacy of the Attic stock.

Finally, the very core of the argument was refuted by Galton himself in his later "Inquiries into Human Faculty and its Development." The concrete instance he there discusses is a different one, but the principle involved is the same. Why, he asks, does the Renaissance contrast so sharply with the preceding epoch of darkness? Is it perchance because the race had made a sudden evolutionary leap? No, answers Galton, "sudden eras of great intellectual progress can not be due to any alteration in the natural faculties of the race, . . . but to their being directed in productive channels." In other words, cultural differences supply no measure of racial differences; momentous cultural differences may arise without any fundamental change of organic constitution. It is simply that social conditions now cause certain exist-

ing racial traits to become active and then again may cause them to lie dormant. This explanation of Galton's is in thorough harmony with the modern historical point of view but since it contravenes the doctrines of racial snobbishness it has remained unquoted by the professional champions of reaction.

It remains true that while Galton did not wholly rule out of court the effects of social environment he continued to stress the dominant rôle of the immutable equipment with which man is provided at birth. Men, he recognized, are born unequal and their inequalities can not be eradicated by any amount of education. With this intellectual insight into reality he could not rest content. He aspired to raise humanity to a higher level, and since he considered educational agencies as impotent or fleeting in their effects he conceived a scheme suggested by evolutionary reading. If a gardener or dog-fancier could produce all sorts of favoured breeds by mating individuals endowed with the desired traits, why could not similar results be achieved with the human species as the subject of experimentation? The processes of natural selection are painfully slow, but a conscious controller who should prevent the propagation of inferior strains and promote the early and prolific multiplication of superior individuals might greatly accelerate development along the pre-destined path. Mankind would then rapidly gain a higher evolutionary stage, at which the average representative of the species might well equal to-day's exceptional genius.

Like all prophets, Galton was filled with an abundant optimism. It was necessary for his scheme that gifted individuals should be as fertile as normal men and he defended this corollary with not a little ingenuity. For example, when confronted with the relative childlessness of eminent judges, he pointed out that from economic and social reasons these generally married heiresses. But an heiress is by definition the sole child of her parents, hence is hereditarily tainted with infertility. Thus it is not the able jurists but their wives that must be held accountable for the dearth of progeny. This vindication of the fertility of eminent men was of a piece with the more general assumption that physical vigour is generally linked with unusual intellect. "A collection of living magnates in various branches of intellectual achievement," we read, "is always a feast to my eyes; being, as they are, such massive, vigorous capable-looking animals." True in England, perhaps, where scholarship and wealth go so largely hand in hand and where the leisured classes are votaries of athletics. But would the statement hold for a galaxy of French notables? Eugenically speaking, it is of course eminently desirable that all the favoured variations should appear jointly, but, as a matter of fact, do they? And if not, what traits shall we breed for to the neglect of others?

This is, indeed, the very core of the whole problem. When a nurseryman desires a yellowish flower or a spineless cactus, his goal, whether dictated by a fancier's whim or by utilitarian considerations, hardly admits of moral opposition, for it bears too remotely, if at all, on human welfare. But when men are mated with a conscious purpose to effect a definite end, there is bound to be a clash of ideals. The eugenicist may have quite definite notions of what is desirable, but whether his decrees would tally with the judgment of the wisest and best of mankind is another matter. Even a disinterested commission of experts would run the danger of yielding to professional bias and subjective preferences, to the lasting detriment of

true progress. Did not Galton himself speak of poets and artists as "a sensuous, erotic race, exceedingly irregular in their way of life?" What is to prevent the eugenicist, when in possession of the State machinery, from legislating out of their procreative rights any class of whose tenets or characters he may disapprove? Galton does not solve the problem when in his Huxley lecture he emphasizes the qualities that make up "civic worth," for that phrase remains undefined and indefinable. Objective tests may be devised to grade individuals for any given trait, but who is to determine the intrinsic value of the traits themselves? If A, like all creative thinkers, challenges authority while B invariably succumbs in puppet-like docility to the decrees of the ruling officialdom, which of the two exhibits the greater civic worth? The answer does not follow from their psychological differences, however well established, for it depends entirely on one's personal ideal of the State and its relations to the individual. Nothing in past, and especially in recent, experience warrants the belief that a council of learned men could be safely entrusted with the power of regulating once and for all the future of mankind. It was assuredly no shallow sentimentalism but a healthy critical instinct that led the liberal Alfred Russel Wallace to deprecate eugenics as "the meddling interference of an arrogant scientific priestcraft." Even so, his forecast inclines to the side of optimism. Everything points to the fact that we should have to combat not merely the half-knowledge of disinterested or at least subconscious bias but the deliberate malevolence of the reactionary cloaking his self-interest with high-flown scientific verbiage.

In fairness to Galton it must be explicitly stated that he remained largely free from the perversities of some of his most ardent followers. He advocated no drastic enactments outraging the sensibilities of humane men. Indeed, the suppression of inferior strains appealed to him as less important than the positive attempt to foster superior ones. On the race question, too, his record is far from discreditable when we again apply a historical point of view. In the first post-Darwinian decades, the temptation to find among the coloured races so many links connecting brute and Caucasian was well-nigh irresistible to a thoroughgoing evolutionist, and the tendency could not be checked by ethnographic knowledge, which was so largely non-existent. Under these conditions Galton's judgment of the "coarse and lazy Negro" must be rated a temperate one: he did not deny that an appreciable number of this race surpassed the white average and that its prodigies might even rank with eminent, though not with illustrious, Caucasians. How far he was from entertaining extreme views on the subject appears from his defence of "the much underrated Bushmen of South Africa" and his frankly expressed admiration of Eskimo map-making. Within the Caucasian fold itself he was doubtless inclined to assume differences in the hereditary aptitudes of different subraces, but I find not the slightest evidence that might connect him with the propaganda of a Chamberlain or our own know-nothings.

But the liberal admirer of Galton need not confine himself to pleading extenuating circumstances. Galton has exerted a most salutary influence on political philosophy in supplying a corrective for much maudlin phrase-mongering and the shallow belief in the infinite perfectibility of human nature through educational processes. Men are assuredly not born alike and can not be made alike. For their own good no less than

for that of the community their differences must not be ignored, and a rational system of education must reckon with them. So far the liberal has every reason to be as grateful to biological scrutiny of the doctrine of universal equality as the intellectual radical should be grateful to the epistemology that purges the naïve materialism of his adolescence. But as true radicalism is confirmed by a critique of first principles; so liberalism, too, will be only fortified in the end by the impact of biological facts. It is precisely one of the gravest indictments that Democracy prefers against existing society that natural ability is so severely handicapped, if not utterly crushed, by the artificial distribution of opportunities for development. Is not one of its cardinal tenets the Napoleonic demand that talent should be free to set out on its appropriate career?

Beyond this point liberals have no call to follow Galton's leadership in practical sociology. The great scientist is not even in his own field a pontiff exacting servile acquiescence. Apart from his special domain, his opinions raise not even the presumption of authority. Psychologically interesting they will often be, no doubt, as individual differences always are. But as we are under no constraint to follow a Newton or Pasteur in his theology, so we are not compelled to yield homage to the eugenic creed of Galton, nor can such rejection of allegiance be interpreted as an imputation on his scientific greatness. Values stand distinct from objective reality and are appraised in another forum and by other criteria.

ROBERT H. LOWIE.

A NOTE FROM THE NORTHWEST.

THE sojourners in this verminous bunkhouse on the Topenish Bench are quite sharply divided into three groups. They are either pastoral, industrial or nomadic. Assembled here for a season to do the heavy work of the harvest at a wage of four dollars a day and found, they seem to form a homogeneous company. As a unit they will cut, shock and bale alfalfa; shock and thresh wheat, barley and oats; pick and pack peaches, pears and apples. But when the harvest is being perfunctorily celebrated by urban populations this small society will break down into the three components and each will follow its dream.

Bluey is a perfect example of the nomadic fragment. He is the most inutile of the waste products of modern society—the "floater" *par excellence*. He is a liar, thief, sot and sexual pervert. He is dozing his life away on the floor of hell, insensible to the torments of his damnation. An intelligent I. W. W. would scorn his sodden companionship—call him a "bay-rum revolutionist." For Bluey prefers an inordinate indulgence of his migratory instinct and the dreams that reside in hair- tonic and lemon extract to the wine of revolutionary propaganda.

Blackie, the industrial, recently thrown out of a job in the Seattle shipyards by the "tightening of money," is a sulphurous zealot. His brow is thunder and lightning as he denounces "capital." The bunkhouse, for all its heavy fatigue, heeds and ponders silently his detonations. He disturbs ever so slightly even the apathy of Bluey, the incorrigible, who queries thickly, "Where do you get that stuff about boogwas, (bourgeois)? Why don't you talk a lingo a man can savvy?"

"Oh, hell! I don't expect you to get this," Blackie rebukes him, and turns again to the stolid audience of "studdy" agricultural labourers.

These last, the pastorals, are for the most part of old American farmer stock, and they have a secret pride in this that holds them aloof from Blackie, Bluey and their genera. The younger of these would-be farmers are the men who were fighting along the Bouresches Road or preparing for the Argonne campaign two years ago, while the older ones were drudging through the war harvest in undermanned baling and threshing crews. All of them are the material of first-class, independent farmers. They can spray, cultivate, irrigate and harvest. They "understand teaming" and can herd sheep. They can run and repair tractors and

stationary gasoline engines—perform all the hundred hard, exacting tasks of the ranch. They have an innate love of farm labour and a grievous hunger for land. Give any one of them—Dick Fuller, for instance—a good fertile forty acres of this valley and adequate machinery and stock and he will be spurred on, not only by his love of the work but, also, by his love of a particular "forty" all his own, to produce with maximum efficiency food for himself, a large family of self-reliant boys and girls and incidentally for the nation.

But in this broad valley "forties" are fast coalescing into quarter-sections of 160 acres, quarters into full sections and full sections into the latifundia of potato and alfalfa "kings"; one of them boasts 5074 acres of alfalfa. In fact, a round dozen of bonanza farmers and the local bankers hold the valley in the hollow of their hands and it is for these generals that the armies of propertyless, migratory workers are yearly mobilized, demobilized and demoralized.

When the crops are in and the snow begins to creep down the rim of arid hills that bounds their preserve, these squires will drive away to Santa Barbara, successfully to compete with industrial magnates in spending money for luxury. Bluey's squalid migrations will carry him from one railway "extra gang" to another, to the orange groves of California or to the oil-fields of Texas or Oklahoma. He will continue to shirk, to lie and to besot himself with the still available forms of alcohol. Blackie, the industrial worker will return to the cheap lodging-house in San Francisco or Seattle to spread the gospel of the One Big Union and the social revolution, while Dick Fuller who loves the land will hibernate with the cattle of the Yakima.

Some morning in November venerable Dad Armstrong, another pastoral, will be seen carrying two iron buckets filled with mash to the hogs. As he opens the gate of the corral he will turn to Dick Fuller and shout with bitter gaiety, "This is how I got my start in life, Dick."

"Still getting started, ain't you, Dad?" Dick will reply as he forks down the raw green alfalfa for the one-eyed mare.

And perhaps some of the resounding catch-words of the I. W. W. will re-echo in their minds and explain to them their aching hunger for land and human dignity.

EDWARD T. BOOTH.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

THE WAY THINGS WERE AT SCARBOROUGH.

SIRS: I have just come away from the Conference of the British Labour party at Scarborough. It may interest you to know that the main line of discussion was on the subject of foreign policy. In this connexion it is, perhaps, worth noting that British Labour's attitude on foreign affairs is strictly in line with old liberal tradition, and that it has so far failed to develop a distinctly Labour programme for dealing either with subject nations or with foreign nations. To a detached observer like myself it was rather amusing to listen to one labour leader after another attempting to moderate imperialism with the humanitarian touch, (a piece of sentimentality which the British upper classes are foolish enough to leave out). These labour leaders like to talk of the British Empire as the British Commonwealth, apparently under the impression that the substitution of a good word for a bad one will transform the institution—which strikes me as being rather like trying to tame a tiger by calling it a pretty pussy.

Of course, in the end, after strong opposition, the conference did come out for Irish self-determination and for resumption of relations with Russia: but it is obvious that the Labour party has no coherent theory of the part of the state in either national or international affairs. By and large British labour is very well content with the rôle which the state is playing to-day in the present constitution of the world. Most of the leaders seem to think that everything would be all right if only a sufficiently large number of labour delegates were in Parliament to form a government. For all their denials, they are still liberals, or rather liberal-labourites. Some of them are a little dismayed to find that the present machinery of government is so complicated, so full of little points of finesse, that they are becoming pretty well tired out during the long period of their apprenticeship, but nevertheless they go on still stoutly believing that the same machine can be made to produce a perfect socialist commonwealth as soon as ever they can get the hang of how the thing works. Which, as Euclid bravely remarks, is absurd. I am, etc., M. L.

AN EXCELLENT PLAN.

SIRS: I can not help feeling somewhat shocked and grieved at the suggestion you make in your current comment this week that you are in doubt as to whether you will vote for any of the presidential candidates next November. I do not like to think that any citizen of this great country will so far forget the duty he owes to humanity as to follow your example. For many of us who seldom go to church the opportunity to be closeted in a voting-booth alone with one's God once every four years is a religious experience not lightly to be disregarded. Frankly, sirs, do you think you yourselves can afford to miss such an opportunity? Fortunately, I think I can suggest a way out of the difficulty. It is the way which I am going to take, and I know of several others who are going to pursue a similar course. After carefully examining the records and speeches of Senator Harding and Governor Cox, and after studying the Republican and Democratic programmes I have decided to mark my ballot with a vote for the Governor for President and the Senator for Vice-President. Many of my friends are taking up this idea with enthusiasm. We are forming a Cox and Harding Club in our town—won't you join? I am, etc.,
L. C.

THE EXPLORATION OF FUNDAMENTALS.

SIRS: It rejoiced me to see in the *Freeman* for 16 June an editorial opinion that "the only thing that is really permanent in human life is its spiritual activity." The specific application of the doctrine was to music; but its wider bearings are obvious. It would seem that underneath "the economic fundamental" (your insistence on which I praise) you may be finding something more fundamental still. Let such experiences, in the "intellectual-proletarian movement," multiply, and much may be hoped. It may be hoped, for instance, that a glance will suffice to disclose the emptiness of statements like that in which your contributor Mr. Nevins summarizes an aspect of Thomas Hardy's philosophy. "As to Gods, Man knows nothing of them." At what has man laboured so long, so universally, so persistently as at the exploration of Deity? And the quest which of all has most attracted him is of all the one in which the sum of his findings totals exactly zero! It is a strange idea. Almost as strange is Mr. Nevins's allusion to the Phaedo: making his own the conclusion of Simmias that Socratic reasoning is "a frail raft but the best we have," he leaves unrecalled the wistful afterthought, "unless there should come a surer vessel . . . some Word of God." I am, etc.,
Warren, Pa. C. I. CLAFLIN.

It strikes us that no one would take much interest in social justice for any reason but that under it, and only under it, man is free to fulfil the primary law of his being. Why bother about the economic fundamental except that it enables man to be as good as he knows he ought to be and really wants to be?—EDITORS.

THE POINT IS WELL TAKEN.

SIRS: To humble seekers after light upon Einstein's theory of relativity, Mr. Deimel's article in your issue of 14 July, seems to be most befuddling in the very place where one can get a perfectly clear idea of what he is driving at.

In undertaking to prove that the axiom "Every whole is greater than its part" is not always necessarily true he asks us to "draw a triangle with sides one, two and three inches long." Is not this asking a little too much of people who have been brought up on the old fashioned theorem that any one side of a triangle is less than the sum of the other two sides. Even though this theorem may have gone glimmering with the one upon which it depends for proof, we challenge Mr. Deimel or anyone else to actually "draw a triangle with sides one, two and three inches long."

However, Mr. Deimel would probably be willing to let us use any triangle with unequal sides to prove his point, or if not, we are willing to suppose his triangle possible and will draw lines as he directs from the shortest side to the longest side parallel to the third side. Just as he says, we see that these lines connect points on the short side with points on the long side and "for every point on the long side there is exactly one on the short." "We thus come upon assemblages of points" says Mr. Deimel, "of which part is 'as large as' the whole."

In arriving at this queer conclusion Mr. Deimel must overlook the fact that what is known as a mathematical point has no dimension at all and that if two or more mathematical points touch they must necessarily coincide and form one point, not a line, unless he means a dotted line. In the latter case his conclusion is exactly the same as if

he said that a line of fifty soldiers spaced at one pace intervals contains exactly as many soldiers as a line of fifty soldiers spaced at three pace intervals. Poor Cantor! Poor Dedekind! Was it really on this account that over a generation ago they decided that the number-concept needed revision and generalization?

We seem driven to the conclusion that Mr. Deimel's points must have at least two dimensions so that "assemblages" of them may be fitted together and thus form lines, also of two dimensions. But using such lines for his triangle and his parallel lines—assuming, of course, that they are of equal width—and drawing the said parallel lines with their sides fitted close together like floor-boards, we find that the "points" formed by the intersections on the long side of the triangle are of greater area than those formed on the short side and that the sum of the areas of the "points" on each "line" is equal to the area of the "line" which they compose. So we seem to be just where we were when we started out. I am, etc.,
Washington, D. C. B. C. FLOURNOY.

TERMINOLOGICAL JAZZ.

SIRS: In your issue of 23 June one of your contributors tells us that the Chicago Opera is in the hands of "a shrewd, unimaginative commercial man." The truth of this statement came home to me forcibly a few days ago when I saw a sign attached to the home of Chicago Opera, which reads "Boost Chicago Opera." "Boost" and "Opera"—to my hearing the words don't mix very well. I am, etc.,

C. J. F.

IT WOULD SAVE PAPER TOO.

SIRS: These are the days of reform by mass action: why not, while the iron is hot, strike a blow for American fiction and the American drama? Briefly, I suggest the introduction of a bill in Congress suspending for a period of ten years the publication of all magazines whose circulation is above 50,000 and closing all theatres with a seating capacity above 200. This, I am sure, would greatly benefit the whole population. Our worthy novelists and playwrights would then be able to find an employment, equally lucrative and more congenial to their temperaments, in the automobile business; the few sincere artists would be relieved of any opportunity to compromise their talents; and the taste of the general public would be immeasurably chastened. Alcohol has been abolished; why not ink? I am, etc.,
Boston, Mass. JEREMY COLLIER, JR.

A STRANGE SILENCE.

SIRS: You probably know that some time ago the British Government sent a delegation headed by Sir Stuart M. Samuel to investigate the persecution of Jews in Poland. After endless delays which caused debates and inquiries in Parliament the report was formally made public in a "White Book" by the British Government on 5 July, 1920.

It was not a pleasant report. The commission placed the entire guilt of the pogroms on the Polish Government. It gave the number of killed and wounded and brought details of the brutality employed by the Polish soldiers in punishing the Jewish population. It proved conclusively that the pogroms were organized by the military forces and that the Government neither punished the offenders nor made any monetary retribution for the great damages that were done. The findings of the commission were corroborated and strengthened by the reports of Captain Wright and Sir Horace Rumbold, which are incorporated in the "White Book," with Sir Stuart Samuel's report.

The Jewish Correspondence Bureau at once sent a cable giving a concise resumé of these reports to all the Jewish newspapers in the land. The report appeared in full with editorial comment in all the Yiddish dailies. And here comes the puzzling part of the affair. Not a single word about this report has appeared in the American daily newspapers either in New York or the other cities. How do you explain this? Can it be that the Associated Press, the United Press and the other organs of information had missed this report? Or did they, on account of the nature and character of the report deliberately choose to close their eyes and ears and pass it by in silence? As things are this moment knowledge of these reports is confined exclusively to the readers of the Yiddish dailies.

There is interesting material for investigation here. I am, etc.,
New York. GEORGE KESSNER.

BOOKS.

A BRITISH SOCIALIST ON INDIA.

"THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA," by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, the English labour leader, is not intended to mince facts. It is an able account of some of the sacrifices and achievements that entitle Young India to recognition in the world's remaking, as well as of some of the creative forces among the common people which are shaping the country's political geography. Mr. Macdonald offers, in the first place, a lucid history of the administrative system in India, secondly, a "nationalistic" criticism of the organs of government, which seeks to locate the root of the present troubles, thirdly, a programme of reform, which, as a member of the British Labour party, the author considers to be necessary in order to save India for the Empire. For whatever else Mr. Ramsay Macdonald may be, he is first and last an English patriot, i.e., an imperialist. His writings, therefore, are of value as exhibiting the lines of *rapprochement* that the main body of British socialism seeks to establish between a subject race and its masters. For this reason, the author's "Awakening of India," published in 1908, during the period of the birth throes of the Young India movement became an international text-book.

The attempt to reconcile the claims of Indian nationalism with the interests of an empire of alien rulers is, however, not the only consideration in Mr. Macdonald's present effort. The new volume has been produced in an international *milieu* which is characterized by at least two sets of conditions. The first are those generated by the talk of a League of Nations, and the second is the *fait accompli* of a socialist State in Bolshevik Russia. And it is because the author seeks to harmonize his theories with these novel phenomena that his book acquires an importance such as is hardly indicated by the limitations of its title.

Mr. Macdonald suggests that India should be "tried" with the "responsibility of being tutor to some of the East African peoples under the care of the League of Nations."

It would be a great experiment, [he says]. If it failed, the failure would soon be detected and would produce no great harm; and if it succeeded, as I believe it would, it would stamp India with a dignity which would command for it a position of unquestioned equality amongst the federated nations of the Empire.

But here Mr. Macdonald's logic, idealistic as it is, bids farewell to *Realpolitik*. Why should he be so anxious, a Frenchman might ask, for still another evidence of India's "dignity" and "unquestioned equality amongst the federated nations of the Empire"? As a student of colonial politics, Mr. Macdonald must be thoroughly familiar with the active part that India's men, money, and material resources have played during a whole century in the expansion of England. Was it not with Indian help that Napoleon's Oriental allies were subdued? Was it not with Indian contributions in brain, brawn and bullion that the Persian Gulf was converted into a British lake, and Russia and France obliged to set a limit to their ambitions in Asia and North Africa? India has been "tried" with plenty of such "experiments" from the days of the British conquests of Hongkong down to the pacification of South Africa and Egypt. And, it may be asked, whether she has ever been less responsive or less successful than in the recent war against Great Britain's German enemies ending in the occupation of Mesopotamia and Palestine?

But if Mr. Macdonald because of his idealism fails here to square his theories with the facts, he fails no less in his analysis of the relations between socialism and nationalism, but for the opposite reason—because he is not idealistic enough. For the time being, the methodology of subject races happens to lie beyond his ken.

Mr. Macdonald is aware that in India as elsewhere capitalistic tendencies are rampant, and that the interests of the *ryot* and the working-man are often overlooked by the bourgeois mentality. Therefore, he argues, let British rulers as protectors of the people boss the Indian administration. This is Leninism—without the sincerity of a Lenin.

Even the most rabid advocate of the economic interpretation of history knows that there is a limit to his doctrine. Since the ages depicted in Hesiod's "Works and Days," the conflict between patricians and plebs has been an eternal question in race-development. But no amount of argument in the name of international humanitarianism could convince an American of the wisdom of placing the United States under, say, French domination, because, forsooth, the interests of the American masses would be better handled by the countrymen of St. Simon, Louis Blanc and Jaurès than they are by their present masters. Nor could the people of the Argentine be advised with any hope of success to submit to Russian control in order that the class-struggle arising among them from the labour-unions of Italian immigrants, might have the benefit of political doctoring at the hands of the latest experts in communistic government. To be logical, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald would have to believe as an international socialist, that there is nothing to choose between a Britain under German rule and a Britain under British rule, so long as the ruling-class consists for the most part of profiteers and slum-proprietors and is identified in one way or another with the capitalists.

This is a fallacy which comes from a misunderstanding of recent events in Russia. It is, in fact, a variety of counterfeit Bolshevism, manufactured in England, mainly for medicinal purposes—"not for internal use," however, but "for external application." For if there is one fact clearly revealed by the new Russia it is the truism that democracy or no democracy, social equality or no social equality, political freedom, as the world is constituted to-day, is the first vital desideratum in all those regions where one people is governed by another. The primary need to-day of every Asiatic people is an absolute and unconditioned sovereignty of the Japanese pattern. All questions as to the form of government, whether monarchical, republican or soviet, are of subsidiary importance at the present moment. In any case, these are problems of internal politics, and so too are such questions as the adjustment of the relations between capital and labour, the redistribution of lands, forests and mines, the repudiation of national debts, "progressive taxation," and the like. To ignore this fundamental consideration or in any way to belittle it, while analyzing the nationalistic ideals of Young India, is hardly to assist in the clearing-up of long-standing international confusions.

BENOY KOOMAR SARKAR.

TWO MINOR POETS.

I HAVE before me two excellent specimens of minor poetry—"A Canticle of Pan" by Witter Bynner¹ and "The Little School" by Sturge Moore². One of them was written by an Englishman, a painstaking scholar, a capable critic, a student of books rather than of men. The other was written by an American, breezy, careless, no scholar, a journalist, lecturer, globe-trotter by profession. And yet both these books are essentially minor verse, for the reason that they spring not from passion and from knowledge, but from sentiment.

The great poet abstains as far as humanly possible from giving way to sentiment. That is not to say, he does not feel sentiment. We all feel sentiment, more or less, from the humblest to the highest type of intelligence. But the great poet transmutes his sentiment into something higher and finer. He is incapable of dealing

¹"The Government of India." J. Ramsay Macdonald. New York: B. W. Huebsch.

¹"A Canticle of Pan." Witter Bynner. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

²"The Little School." T. Sturge Moore. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

with the unfused and confusing generalizations of mere sentiment, for the reason that they are too common and that they do not insistently demand expression. The great poet sets himself a task at once more difficult and fascinating. His aim is to balance sentiment continually against knowledge and experience; and he admits no sentiment into his scales of judgment that is not nicely weighed and balanced against some quite impersonal truth. For sentiment is at once too personal and too vague to become the vehicle of any sort of poetry that can be read and remembered.

Witter Bynner forfeits our respect at the outset by writing a canticle wherein he imagines Pan and the Christ Child as friends; he continues to forfeit it by a vein of breezy, Vachel Lindsay-Stephen Graham optimism that runs through his book. Sturge Moore forfeits our interest, if not our respect, by a sort of timid refusal to come out and stare life in the face; his negative shrinking pleasantness betrays him, as indeed it betrays too many English poets. So neither can be said to be great poets. But what use has this world for a great poet? The world has none, except to crucify him living, and gape after him dead. So let us be grateful for Bynner and Sturge Moore as they are, and see how far either achieves poetry.

Sturge Moore is, I think, granting his limitations, by far the better poet. He has none of that deadly facility which is a symptom that besets even some great poets. One feels that he thinks deeply on language and on form, and that his music comes from a keen, individual understanding of both. "Winds' Work," "Words for the Wind," the first two stanzas of "Shoes and Stockings Off," "Life" (all but the last stanza, which is doggerel), "The Rower's Chant"—all these, one feels, are not only poetry, but poetry that has dictated its own form, poetry written according to no accepted model. It is true that these poems have very little to say, it is true that they are too mature to be children's poems, and that no child would like them, probably. Yet they are somehow beautiful, in spite of every objection that can be urged against them. And even such an unsuccessful poem as "David and Jonathan" starts off with four lines of the finest poetry, before it degenerates into those jingles of which Sturge Moore is too fond.

Witter Bynner, on the other hand, employs nothing of Sturge Moore's skill. His range of form varies from *vers-libre* to the strictest metrical models, but whatever form he uses, one feels the same carelessness, the same breezy indifference to fine expression, the same thoroughgoing, fine-day-to-day-neighbour, democratic attitude to art. His book is three times as long as Sturge Moore's, yet it contains fewer pages of pure, essential poetry than that volume. "The Wild Star," "Vagrant," "Gipsying," "In Havana," "Grass Tops,"—these five poems are about all the book contains. The rest, some two hundred odd pages, is simply facile padding. And even the poems I have mentioned, these cries out of a vagrant heart, might somehow have been made more poignant. I doubt if they are as good of their kind as Sara Teasdale's miniature lyrics. They certainly do not justify the pomposity which swings from Tolstoy to Saint-Gaudens, from Whitman to Jane Addams, from Karl Liebknecht to Jehovah. One can only say that Witter Bynner lacks the artist's humility before his subjects. And that being the case, he lacks also the artist's understanding.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF HUMAN SELECTION.

Of all the sources of inefficiency in modern industrial organization, the present slipshod methods of hiring employees is the most obvious. The capitalist-employer himself is actually beginning to worry about it and is learning to watch his "labour-turnover" rate as anxiously as he has always watched stock-exchange quotations. If he reads any of those brightly illustrated periodicals where "efficiency experts" publish their wares, he will have it plainly suggested to him that the promiscuous selection

of "help" by the foreman of each shop may be guided by the same favouritism, nepotism, graft, or at best, mere chance, which have so long been familiar in the field of politics; and that the survivors in this struggle of applicants are not necessarily more efficient industrially, nor more likely to stay longest in the shop. In brief, the expert's contention is that there is a continuous migration in and out of the factory, with all the attendant economic waste of disorganization.

But these suggestions remained merely as suggestions until a few years ago when methods of statistical investigation began to be used. A vast number of studies undertaken by the new "consulting engineers," by government bureaux and by business organizations themselves, now make it possible to state definitely what this continuous migration of labour amounts to. In the average American factory, it is the rule to find a "labour-turnover" around 200 per cent. This means that the number of employees who leave the factory every year is twice as large as the average number during the year of the total working force. Statisticians have gone further than this, and have assessed the cost of each man who leaves his job and has to be replaced by a "green" hand, at from \$35 to \$200. Taking \$100 as a reliable though conservative figure in the present year of low money values, it follows that with a 200 per cent turnover, \$200 must be paid out in proportion to every man in the average working force.

It is at this point that the employer wakes up with a start. While on the one hand he is trying to keep the average wage down to a "reasonable" basis, but not too far below the minimum subsistence level, he sees on the other hand to his horror, at least \$200 per man being added by mere inefficiency in organization. Why, he might as well be increasing wages ten per cent all round. The thing is preposterous! He must get an employment manager at once, even one of those new psychological examiners who will weed out the likely migrant before good money is wasted on organizing and teaching him.

Dr. Henry C. Link is one of these practical psychologists. His aim, in a sentence, is to effect in the course of a few minutes' examination, a selection of factory employees whose efficiency and stability in the shop will stand the test of time. To devise such an examination; calls for a knowledge of the shop requirements and patient experimentation with employees, whose ability time has already tested but which scientific methods must reduce to objective numerical terms. Dr. Link shows a sound orientation in these matters, and in his book¹ gives a clear account of the tests he has personally used in various situations; but in spite of its sweeping title this book does not review the theory and practice of the author's fellow-psychologists, and its lack of references is a defect.

New as is this psychology of human selection, it already embraces several rival schools. Two of these schools are especially notable. Roughly, they may be characterized as those who believe, like Dr. Link, in the overwhelming importance of special aptitudes, and those whose belief in the efficacy of general intelligence has been re-animated by the findings of Majors Yoakum and Yerkes² in their classification of men conscripted into the United States Army. Dr. Link is interested solely in what men do, not what they are: his tests aim to correspond in their results solely with efficiency in performance, and they are devised to measure the essential elements in the particular job where the workers are required.

It is particularly interesting to contrast these various tests with the two standard group examinations recorded in "Army Mental Tests" given to recruits, one "verbal" for all literates, and the other, proceeding by pantomime, for all illiterates. The results obtained by both these methods, if they do not quite prove the tests to be unerring, undoubtedly suggest the superiority of the test over the no-test way. The practical success of the test, of course, is measured by the agreement between the order

¹ "Employment Psychology." Henry C. Link. New York: The Macmillan Co.

² "Army Mental Tests." Clarence S. Yoakum and Robert M. Yerkes. New York: Henry Holt & Co.

of merit which it brings out among the men tested, and the order of these men in their industrial productivity, their school record, their military or civil rank, or the opinion held of them by their fellows or superiors. For instance, Majors Yoakum and Yerkes consider it a distinct success when "some 306 soldiers from organizations about to be sent overseas, were designated by their commanding officers as unfit for foreign service," and "were referred for psychological examination with the result that ninety per cent were discovered to be ten years or less in mental age, and eighty per cent nine years or less." The total result of the army tests as conducted on 94,000 white draft-recruits was to bring out the average for the various non-commissioned ranks in marked agreement with the positions they held in the military hierarchy. On the surface, this would seem highly gratifying to the examiners, but the enormous gap shown between commissioned officers as a whole and the sergeants, does not tally very well with one's own experience.

Dr. Link also records his successes. In one instance, he tells of some girls, working on the job of detecting by eye minute defects in army shells, who were given a large number of tests. Of these tests, two, consisting in cancelling or checking given numbers in a whole pageful of mixed figures, were found to agree remarkably well in their results with actual production in the shop. These two tests, proven successful where the shop-efficiency was known, were then given to new applicants whose efficiency was problematical. Of twenty-five new-comers passed by the test, all succeeded in producing the fifty pounds an hour required in the shop; of eight new-comers falling below the test standard but yet not rejected for work only two were subsequently successful in the shop. Further, as to stability and "turnover," the "average term of those who were recommended and hired on the basis of the tests was almost ten times as long as the average term of those who were hired contrary to the evidence of the tests."

Thus we return to the problem of cutting down the cost of labour turnover. Dr. Link puts forward education as the chief remedy. "The most universal and powerful factor in reducing labour turnover and in maintaining a healthy state of employment is education. Education is the most stabilizing influence known to man."

But do not Dr. Link's own theories and results suggest that there is a malignant force more powerful yet than the worker's ignorance? Education would presumably increase the worker's general intelligence more than any other quality, but on Dr. Link's own argument it is precisely this general intelligence that is not wanted in our highly specialized industry. And is it not likely that the more a man is educated the less he will care to stay where his education is not wanted? Which leads one to the conclusion that the attempt to reduce the "labour turnover" should begin with the job rather than the man, and that before educating the man for the job we must try to make the job fit for the educated man.

Meanwhile it is to be feared that the average type of employer must continue to pay his ten per cent toll for a "turnover," with the hope of but petty abatements.

P. SARGANT FLORENCE.

SHORTER NOTICES.

THE Four Seas Company has shepherded into English two one-act plays which would have commanded wide attention a dozen years ago. Both are as old as that or older, and although one is the product of Verner von Heidenstam, the Swedish Nobel Prize winner of 1916, and the other was first published in Vienna by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, they have qualities in common. Both are pictorial and poetic. Von Hofmannsthal's "Death of Titian" is really a poem, and is the poorer play of the two. It was written in 1892, when the author was eighteen, and was produced in honour of Böcklin, with a prologue, in 1901. This group of monologues of the old master's pupils gathered about his death-bed possessed the ecstatic phrasing and the comparative aimlessness of youthful genius. Over all there is a blue-bronze atmosphere which John Heard has not completely lost in his English

version. Moonlit Karnak and its animated idols give more startling colour to von Heidenstam's "Birth of God."² The dialogue is not ineffective and von Heidenstam punctuates it adequately with stage effects. Yet its rather oratorical progress is not entirely convincing. The answer to the yearning for a god on which the whole piece turns is a piece of verbal hocus-pocus: "Nevertheless thou hast a God to honour from that moment in which thou believest that He, some day, shall be born." It is Dunsany diluted with Swedenborg. Von Heidenstam shows in "The Birth of God" more capacity for action than von Hofmannsthal, but like him he is too fond of colour and sound. He neither builds up a character nor evolves a haunting idea—indispensable desiderata to-day in poetic drama.

F. E. H.

WHOEVER wrote Buffalo Bill's autobiography has made a creditable job of it. If the picturesque plainsman himself guided the pen, his authorship is as unerring as his marksmanship. There is, however, a literary polish in the narrative which is rather difficult to associate with a pioneer scout who, as a lad of thirteen, could not "so much as write his own name." Our suspicions are further aroused when we compare the cover of the book with the title page; "Buffalo Bill's Life Story: An Autobiography," says the former, and the latter, "An Autobiography of Buffalo Bill." Here is surely more than a casual avoidance of the little preposition "by" Buffalo Bill. All of which, however, does not alter the fact that the volume is a brisk, vivid and authentic picture of a departed era, so rich in detail and so bold in outline that it leaves most of our purely fictional Wild West stories in total eclipse. Colonel Cody's reminiscences reflect the variety and unexpectedness of frontier existence. He was essentially a showman in everything he undertook; the love of display lurks in his early scouting and Indian fighting no less than in his "grand entrance" at the head of his Wild West spectacle. But of the motives underlying his actions and of his philosophy—if he possessed any—few traces have crept into these pages.

L. B.

A REVIEWER'S NOTE-BOOK.

ONE of the fantasies I like to indulge is that of an American journal of literary criticism as good as any one of half a dozen European journals I might name. Some day, I know, we shall have such a journal; and, although no American critic or publisher has ever, I suppose, with full consciousness of what it implies, seriously entertained such an idea and few, perhaps, consider that it would be possible, I am convinced that America might have such a journal now. What reasons have I for thinking so? And why does a journal of this kind seem to me so desirable?

SUCH a journal, to discuss the latter question first, might, I feel, transform the taste of the United States in ten years. Does that strike the reader as a reckless assertion? This, I know, is a time of disillusion as regards the possibilities of human nature; yet it is the war itself that has given me my confidence. Never before—to its own misery!—has human nature shown itself so malleable, so ready to follow the leader, so eager to yield its nose to the fingers of the devil—or of St. Dunstan! In all its lassitude, human nature is in a state of hyper-susceptibility; its iron is hot for any stroke; it is, specifically, eager for enlightenment, for the ways of peace and growth, for a harmony based upon the self-respect of individuals, of groups and of nations. Is this fact as irrelevant to the problems of literary taste and its dissemination as the pundits of our criticism believe? To them taste is a grace of gentle breeding. So it is, in its least essential aspect; it is also something else and more. It is a sense of truth in expression, of sincerity in feeling—a sense, in short, of the distinction between that which feeds and that which fails to feed the spirit. Is it to be imagined that where the spirit is awake and hungry, it is incapable of developing, and developing rapidly, with proper guidance, so obvious a means to its

¹"The Death of Titian." Hugo von Hofmannsthal. Translated from the German by John Heard, Jr. Boston: The Four Seas Company.

²"The Birth of God." Verner von Heidenstam. Translated from the Swedish by Karoline M. Knudsen. Boston: The Four Seas Company.

³"Buffalo Bill's Life Story: An Autobiography." W. F. Cody. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation.

own self-preservation? Given the desire for a greatly expressive literature which plainly now exists in this country, the maturing of taste is only a question of time. A little leaven to-day goes far.

I AM not underestimating the present vulgarity of the public taste. I say merely that it is no indication of the capacities of the public. This vulgarity is, like everything else, the result of natural causes; it is the result, among other things, of the systematic debauchery of the public by publishers, editors and writers who have, for their own ends, deliberately evoked in the public all the base desires that are bred by the repressions of a commercial society. That is a problem in itself. What is relevant here is the part played in this debauchery by the reviewers and the literary editors. What reviewers have done, reviewers can undo—that is the heart of my contention: in so far as reviewers have destroyed taste, they can also create it.

Homo homini lupus, and reviewers are, generally speaking, the weakest wolves in the pack. They are, more often than not, novices in the literary life, and their very ambitions expose them, in all the weakness of their adolescence, to the rapacity of those who are able to give them an "opening." Who can blame them if they exploit themselves and their names and their callow views? For all but the strongest, and even though they destroy themselves by their methods, these methods are almost the condition of their survival as writers at all, however bad. Their state is truly abject. I have seen literary editors led about by the hand from one publisher to another by advertising managers in search of "copy"—for all the world like sheepish and pathetic little prostitutes. Indeed, the collusion between the publishers and the newspapers has passed beyond all shame. I was myself, two or three years ago, offered the post of literary editor of one of the most respectable dailies in New York, a paper with an illustrious past; but as the offer came from the advertising manager, who told me that he had a sort of paternal authority over the book page and who was emphatic about the note of promiscuous "cheerfulness" that had to be struck in its reviews, I passed the opportunity on to a fellow-critic who, although his stomach was stronger than mine, was unable to suffer it for more than two months. What is one to say of these pious newspapers of ours which profess such high moral principles on their editorial pages and abandon the back alleys of their supplements to the panderings of what we so euphemistically call "good nature"? Ignorant, incompetent men direct them—men who, knowing the weight the opinions of their journals carry in the unsophisticated West and South, do not hesitate, in that lucrative "good nature" of theirs, to form unholy alliances with publishers, to discriminate on illegitimate grounds against other publishers, to sanction the most worthless books and ignore or defame the best, to play, in short, fast and loose with a public which they have themselves stupefied and which they despise for accepting their flattery.

ONE might suppose from all this that the very idea of disinterestedness had died out of the American mind. In fact, such is the influence of commerciality that one finds to-day, in what we are pleased to call educated circles, an all but complete absence of the faculty of ethical discrimination. What is good for business is good in itself—that is the view of so many of the descendants of the Mayflower that one wonders upon what they base the discrimination they still maintain against their fellow-Americans: to deny this doctrine, not theoretically, but in any given situation, is to describe oneself as a parlour bolshevik. Does this surprise me? I am not so naïve. The business instinct at once springs down and promotes a contempt for human nature: that being so, what, in such an atmosphere, is the natural fate of the expressions of human nature? Literature is despised in this coun-

try, and no wonder, for literature is the mortal enemy of business; and being despised, it becomes worthy of being despised, and writers and reviewers and editors alike kick it about like the refuse in the street. What a degrading spectacle! One can almost understand that outraged soul who exclaimed: In heaven's name, put out the sun!

AND yet, such is the ductility of human nature, such is the thirst now manifesting itself in this country for a better order of things, I am persuaded that a transformation in the public taste is already in process. Things, by an odd paradox, usually grow better as they grow worse, for every excess in one division of the public causes a reaction in some other; and if a really competent literary journal appeared in the United States it would, I believe, effect an appreciable change not in ten years but in two. For large and loose as this nation is, expressions of power and authority reverberate through it with a strange rapidity; it is notably sensitive to new ideas; it is at last in a position, if those ideas are fructifying, to make substantial use of them. Only in one's enthusiasm—one's devastating American enthusiasm—one ought not to underrate the difficulties of such an enterprise, for that is to underrate the enterprise itself. Such a journal must represent a multitude of positive traits of intellect and character, and not in a single person only but in a group, willing, one and all, to submerge everything but the artist in them in order, like the cathedral-builders, to produce, by their united capacities, a composite effect. To advance the cause of literature, the sincere and truthful expression of the reality within the American people, would have to be their sole aim. And for this end their minds would travel, in search of means, like bees, up and down history and to the four corners of the earth.

Is it demonstrable that there exists in this country a corps of reviewers, willing to co-operate in such an enterprise and able to command, comprehensively, adequately, for America, the whole field of human expression? Who doubts it? Knowledge and insight we have in abundance; what we lack is the sense of form that makes them tell. The hideous and detestable neologisms of the newspaper world, the gray Johnsonian starch of the tongue of the universities—between such literary gorgons one might well hesitate to say that American criticism has a future, and especially when one considers the exacerbated egoism of the existing reviewer. Fine distinctions, fine sensations, fine thoughts can only be expressed in fine language; if they can not be expressed they can not even, if one is to believe Benedetto Croce, be felt. But these are details, details the reviewer discovers quickly enough when he comes to realize the power of literature and the influence for good or ill of his own interpretation of it. The whole difficulty at bottom, in this country, is that the reviewer at once fails to realize the power of literature, because the only literature he knows is without power, and feels that he is without influence, because the influence he exercises is a negative one. In all this he is quite mistaken, as he will see if he examines the logical posture of the facts. The whole problem is, indeed, a problem in vital logic, and that is why one feels that it is certain to be solved.

THE Reviewer recommends the following books to the notice of readers of the *Freeman*:

"A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis," by Sigmund Freud. New York: Boni and Liveright.

"The Great Steel Strike and Its Lessons," by William Z. Foster. New York: B. W. Huebsch.

"The Seventeenth Century" ("The National History of France"), by Jacques Boulenger. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

"John Ferguson," by St. John G. Ervine. New York: The Macmillan Co.

A little sermon by
BERNARD SHAW

BOOK-SELLING in this country is in need, not of reform, but of creation.

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that there are no bookshops in England, so vast are the thickly populated areas of which the statement is literally true.

I lived for many years in a London division containing a quarter of a million inhabitants, and not a single bookshop, although there was a shop at which you could buy nautical instruments presumably for navigating the Regent's Canal.

When Messrs. Smith and Son were temporarily dislodged from the railway stations, they set up bookshops, which relieved the situation a little, and are still a boon to the provinces; but the shortage is still terrific; we have the most complete machinery for producing cheap books in batches of 50,000; but we have no adequate machinery for distributing them; and the production is paralyzed in consequence.

In France and Germany the smallest country towns possess bookshops, in which the most elaborate and expensive historical, scientific and artistic publications are in the window.

In much larger towns in these islands the inhabitants may live to be centenarians without knowing that such books exist, or conceiving the possibility of a shop devoted exclusively to the sale of books. Stationers sell Bibles and Prayerbooks and illustrated newspapers, and perhaps a few cheap novels, just as oilshops sell scrubbing-brushes.

They will even order a book for a very persistent customer, and perhaps get it for him in a fortnight or so. But that is not serious bookselling. The truth is, we are an illiterate nation, and likely to remain so whilst books are harder to come by than bicycles.

All that Mr. Shaw says of England is more than true of America. We reprint the above because it suggests the difficulties which publishers of books and serious periodicals meet. Every reader of books and magazines can help to improve the situation by giving practical encouragement to the bookshop in his town. Buy your books there and, if you prefer not to subscribe to the FREEMAN, ask your bookseller to get it for you every week.

It pleases us to think that the writer of the following letter finds the FREEMAN essential to a complete vacation. His conclusion that our paper is under the ban in California is hasty.

REDLANDS, CALIF.

I AM off for my vacation and desire to see your joyful publication, out in the wilds of California. It is probably under the ban there. So I enclose a dollar bill and request you to send a dollar's worth to the address below. Mark the subscription "to be cancelled at its expiration." In so doing you will avoid confusion and possible loss. Obviously I wish to keep my file here complete, hence this vacation subscription.

But though no person or agency has forbidden the FREEMAN, there are doubtless many amateur censors like the writer of the subjoined missive which, we are confident, will amuse our readers as it has amused us. (We may be pardoned for calling special attention to the secretary's signature. We like that girl!)

NEW YORK CITY.

FINDING a copy of your un-American, radical Bolshevik publication in the hands of my secretary, I destroyed same. It seems that this paper had been loaned by a personal friend and my secretary feels that she is in honour bound to return it. With the utmost reluctance I find it necessary to ask that you mail to this address a copy of the issue of June 23rd, in payment for which you will please find enclosed twenty cents in stamps.

Yours reluctantly,

Grrrrrr.
Sec'y.

The FREEMAN costs 15 cents at hotels, book stores and news stands. If you have tried vainly to purchase it, will you not send us the name and address of the dealer who was unable to serve you?

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